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**SKETCHES AND STUDIES:**  
**DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL.**



## SKETCHES AND STUDIES:

## DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL.

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**LONDON:**

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1874.

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Watson and Hazell, Printers, London and Aylesbury.

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## PREFACE.

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THE contents of this volume are reprinted from 'Oxford Essays,' the 'Quarterly Review,' and 'Fraser's Magazine'; to which they were contributed during a series of many years. They are here collected by the kind permission of the proprietors of those Journals, to whom I desire to offer my sincere thanks.

R. J. K.

MICHAELMAS, 1874.



## CONTENTS.

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	PAGE
✓ CAROLINGIAN ROMANCE . . . . .	1
✓ SACRED TREES AND FLOWERS . . . . .	34
✓ THE DOGS OF FOLK-LORE, HISTORY, AND ROMANCE . . . . .	94
✓ THE CHANGE OF FAITH IN ICELAND, A.D. 1000 . . . . .	147
✓ THE GREAT SHRINES OF ENGLAND . . . . .	197
✓ TRAVELLING IN ENGLAND . . . . .	266
✓ DEVONSHIRE . . . . .	307
✓ ROBERT HERRICK AND HIS VICARAGE . . . . .	363
✓ SKETCHES AND STUDIES FROM BELGIUM:	
I. MECHLIN . . . . .	378
II. LOUVAIN . . . . .	404
III. BRUGES FROM THE BELFRY TOWER . . . . .	427
IV. A VISIT TO THE CHÂTEAUX OF RUBENS AND TENIERS . . . . .	443
✓ A PILGRIMAGE TO ST. DAVID'S . . . . .	459





## I.

### CAROLINGIAN ROMANCE.\*

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CHIVALRY is a wide word, and suggests very different ideas, according as it is viewed from different aspects. Good and evil grew up in it side by side, in the same strange fellowship with which they appear in every institution of mediæval Christendom ; lying, so to speak, in broad masses, rather than in the blended light and shadow of a later civilization. The good is recognised by Arnold, when he gives the title of ‘the best and holiest of kings’ to Saint Lewis,—who nevertheless thought it right to smite the blaspheming Jew with his ‘bonne épée tranchante,’ and who especially patronized the most questionable of all orders, that of the Teutonic Knights ; and by Sir Francis Palgrave, who traces, with whatever truth, all ‘the purer and nobler forms’ of the chivalric sentiment to the nurture and discipline of Ancient Rome. The evil has been insisted on by Mr. Hallam and by Dean Milman, not less positively than the good. Neither good nor evil, however, are to be judged by the standard of our own times ; and there is this broad difference between them : the Antichristian spirit of war and bloodshed, as well as those narrowed feudal relations against which Arnold protests, were both, to a great extent, necessary, inevitable features of the age ; to soften which, as far as might be, came the courtesy, honour, and loyalty, making up the real good of chivalry. Compare the rude ‘leudes’ who surrounded

\* Oxford Essays. 1856.

Childebert and Gontran, as we find them painted by Gregory of Tours, with the knights who followed Godfrey to the Holy Land, or with the ideal Roland of the song of Roncevaux. The old Teutonic spirit is as strongly marked in the last as in the first ; but there are additional elements—touches of nobleness and elevation quite unknown to the Franks of Gregory. The fierce Mohammedanism of chivalry which led on the Crusades,—perhaps even the old Teutonic ferocity, the ‘joy of battle,’ the delight in the ‘clashing of spears on the rims of the linden shields,’—may have been in some sort confirmed by the solemn character given to the institution itself, but certainly did not originate with it. A perpetual state of warfare was the necessary condition of those rude, fierce ages ; and it almost seems as if the only form in which Christianity could be brought really to influence the life of a mail-clad knight was that assumed by chivalry after it had been taken under the immediate patronage and protection of the Church. Cœur-de-Lion himself, in almost every point, not excepting the love of verse and of verse-making, reminds us constantly of one of his own Viking ancestors : strip him of his chivalry, and he becomes little, if at all, better than an Eric or an Anlaf.

Slowly, as the Church interfered, and as the Christian virtues were brought to bear on the strife-loving knight, there came to be formed an ideal of the chivalric character, to which the warrior looked up with reverence as great as that with which the monk regarded the image of monastic perfection as set forth in the lives of Benedict or of Bernard. In this ideal, virtues and vices became blended just as in the reality ; and the peculiar character of the age, varying as it advanced, is always strikingly reflected in it. Such a pattern of all knightly virtues, although it may never have been thoroughly acted up to, must nevertheless have influenced in a very high degree the manners which went to make up the

picture it presented, but which, in its turn, it helped to form and to confirm. Hence the importance and interest attached to mediæval romance. A part of the belief of the times, it is inseparably connected with their history. In this sense, the Charlemagne and Roland of the *trouvères* are not less true and real than their historic prototypes—the rough King Karl of Eginhard, or the shadowy ‘Rotlandus,’ chieftain of the Breton marches, whose name is recorded by the same authentic chronicler in the list of those who fell at Roncevaux. This cycle of Carolingian romance is, more immediately than any other, based on historical tradition, and nowhere else is the gradual growth of chivalry more clearly indicated. The historic Charles the Great represents a period at which Christianity had already become aggressive, and was beginning to identify herself with the innate combativeness of the Frankish character. Hence the Saxon wars, with their forced conversions; the commencement of an alliance between the sword and the cross which became rapidly developed after the death of Charles, and which had attained its full growth in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when the romances of the *Douze Pairs* offer us its fullest and most perfect reflection.

Charles himself became, very soon after his death, an heroic personage. Even while still living, the reputation of his wonderful power, spreading over the whole of Christendom, and extending into the remote regions of the East and North, may have received some marvellous additions. But afterwards, when he had been seated in grim majesty within the vaults of Aachen, his crown on his head, his sword by his side, and the ivory book of the Gospels open on his lap—in that church of Aachen where had been laid up the presents of the Caliph Haroun, golden brocades of Persia, gems and mysterious talismans from the shores of the Tigris and Euphrates,—the fame of ‘Carles li Roi,’ the ‘King with the

snowy beard,' at once increased, and became changed in its character, gathering to itself all the floating tradition, Pagan as well as Christian, which was to be found throughout all the countries where his name was still a household word. In that rude age, when communication from one district to another could only be effected slowly and with difficulty,—when roads were few, and the great lines of the Roman ways, however they may have been cared for by the great Emperor, had, under his immediate successors, fallen into decay, and become overgrown by thorns and brushwood,—when the greater part of northern and western Europe was still covered with enormous forests, wide-spreading heaths, and dreary morasses, it is not difficult to understand how indistinct rumours rapidly changed themselves into certainties, or how legend after legend sprang up and became established with a vitality not less indestructible than that of the green-branched oaks and beeches under which they were born and nurtured. Only a very few could see the great Emperor as he appears in the pages of Eginhard, gigantic in stature and in strength, the head of his vast body of 'vassi' and 'fideles,' bathing with them in the warm springs of Aachen, or wrapped in his winter vest of otter skins, and listening to songs celebrating the heroes 'ante Agamemnona,'—those 'barbara et antiquissima carmina' which had been collected by his express orders. None could see him as modern research has enabled us to do—the greatest and most powerful monarch who ever guided the destinies of Christendom,—governing everywhere by the might of his individual will,—directing everything, from the studies of priests and bishops to the flowers and vegetables cultivated in the gardens of his villas,—presiding in full armour at ecclesiastical councils,—dictating to popes and princes,—and stretching the power of his sceptre in a great cross, from the rocks of the Breton sea to the shores of the Danube and the Dnieper, and from the cities of southern Italy

to the pine-clad coasts of the then mysterious Baltic. Instead of the real historic Charles there rose up another,—‘lesser than Macbeth, yet greater,’—in many respects falling far short of the power and influence wielded by the actual living Emperor, but giving him a new history and new attributes, partly caught from the characteristics of succeeding ages, and partly obtained by blending confusedly together events which had passed during the whole period of the Carolingian dynasty. How completely all the different countries of southern and northern Europe assisted in forming this picture, and to how great an extent their more ancient national traditions became blended with the glories of Charles and his paladins, we shall more readily perceive after glancing at the series of metrical romances in which the idea of the heroic ‘Charlemagne’ became finally embodied; and which, thanks to MM. Paulin Paris and Michel, have been printed from the stately old manuscripts, once the delight of high-bred dames and knights the ‘mirrors of chivalry,’ where, like the sleeping beauty in the wood, they had reposed through so many ages between their delicately-traced borders of strawberry-leaves and wild columbines.

The Carolingian romances, it has already been observed, are, more than any others popular during the middle ages, based on direct historical tradition. Those of King Arthur, whatever obscure realities may be mingled with them, are nevertheless so overlaid with supernatural machinery gathered from the misty storehouses of ‘wild Wales’ and the ‘olde gentil Bretons,’ that the legends of sea-girt Tintagel and of Merlin the Wise can scarcely claim the title of ‘*Chansons de Geste*,’ given properly to such romances as are more immediately occupied with the great deeds and warlike actions of their heroes, and have consequently but little to do with the under-world of dwarfs and elves, or with the fairy ladies—Morgana or Urganda—whose dwelling was in the depths of

some mountain lake, or amid the green, silent recesses of the forest. Little or nothing of this marvellous spirit-world appears in the metrical romances of Charles, although it became to some extent connected with his name in the vaguer floating traditions of the people. The *trouvères* deal rather with the more legitimate miracles of the Church—with the every-day belief in omens from bird and beast, or with the shadowy 'visions of the night' which come to warn the great king on his bed, just as they appear in the earlier sagas of the Scandinavian North. Celtic tradition has very slightly affected the Carolingian romance cycle; whilst, on the other hand, the latter contributed many remarkable features to the 'gestes' of Sir Launcelot and his peers of the Round Table. In relation to the cycle of Arthur, Carolingian romance occupies the same position as that of the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey*. It exhibits no such legend as that of the Sangraal—it has no 'Morgan la fée' and no enchanter Merlin. Its subjects throughout are the wars and great deeds of the 'douze pairs,' their ancestors and successors, from the time of Charles Martel to that of Charles le Chauve, thus embracing the whole period during which the star of the Karlings was in the ascendant. One division alone of these romances can be said to be at all of a less warlike character—that which narrates the birth and early youth of Charles the Great, and which tells of the wanderings and troubles of his mother, 'Berthe aux Grans Piès,' and of that happy time which followed 'quand la Reine Berthe filait'—the golden age when Queen Bertha span, and all the world was prosperous. Taking this as the first division, the rest of the cycle embraces—

2. A series of expeditions attributed to Charles himself, but which are purely fictitious, and reflect the character of the first age of the Crusades. These expeditions were directed, according to the romances, first against the infidels



of the Holy Land, and afterwards against those of Spain. Their object was to recover from the possession of these sons of Mahoun and Termagaunt the relics of the Saviour's passion—the holy lance, the crown of thorns, and the nails.

3. The historical expedition of Charles the Great against the Arabs of Spain, terminating in the famous disaster of Roncevaux—an expedition which, although it is dwelt on at no great length in the pages of the chroniclers, caught at once the attention of the trouvères, and became magnified to the almost entire exclusion of those wars in Italy and beyond the Rhine, in the prosecution of which the life of Charles was mainly passed.

4. The single romance of *Guitclin de Sassoigne*, or the '*Chanson des Saisnes*,' which alone commemorates the Saxon wars and conquests ; and

5. The wars in which the Christians of Gaul drove back the Saracens beyond the Pyrenees, and wrested from them all the southern provinces which they had occupied, besides Catalonia on the Spanish side of the mountains.\* Time and place are mingled in utter confusion throughout this class of romances, the most important of which form an almost independent cycle, known as that of *Guillaume au Court-Nez*.

Of the rude and almost contemporary songs, from which sprang the elaborate *Chanson de Geste* of the later centuries, we find distinct traces in the pages of more than one chronicler. The monk of St. Gall—that great monastery on the shore of the Lake of Constance, founded by the disciple of the Irish Columban, and protected and enriched by the piety of successive generations of Karlings,—who compiled his annals at the express desire of Lewis the Pious, not thirty years after the death of Charles, has inserted long passages which are evidently direct translations from the 'folk-songs' of Italy and of the countries north of the Alps—such as the



scene before the walls of Pavia, where the Lombard King watches the approach of Charles, and the story of the champion Einhere, who drags his horse through the swollen waters of the Meuse.\* Half a century later, Benedict of Soracte, who wrote a life of Eginhard, tells us of the journey—half pilgrimage, half crusade—undertaken by Charles the Great to Jerusalem and Constantinople. This is a realm of pure fable, into which popular and monastic imagination had advanced thus early,—a reflection of the character of Benedict's age, in which the increasing dangers of Eastern pilgrimage were already pointing in the direction of the Crusades. To form the later hero of romance, however, strands from remoter lands, and of different fibres, were to be intertwined with these local songs and stories; in many of which the great deeds of elder gods and heroes had already become confused with those of King Charles. In the Roman annals, not less than in those of his native North, the knight 'sought his pattern of courage, adventure, and strenuousness.'† 'Don Alexander' was scarcely less a favourite in mediæval Spain than 'my Cid' or Pelayo. The story of 'Sir Orfeo' and his adventures in the realm of Faerie was not less frequently the theme of the minstrel than the lay of Camelot, or the daring deeds and unhappy loves of 'Tristrem the knight, who fought for England.' In short, the old legends of the banks of the Tiber, 'cælo gratissimus amnis,' retained their power, and assumed a new vitality among strange races and under foreign conquerors. We cannot doubt that the general romance of northern Europe, especially in its earlier forms, was greatly influenced by them, just as that of Provence and the Troubadours, which in its turn affected the verse of the Langue d'Oui, exhibits traces of yet

\* *Monach. Sangallensis*, l. ii. c. 26, ap. Pertz, *Mon. Germ. Hist.* t. ii.

† Palgrave's *Normandy and England*, i. 34.

more remarkable traditions, resulting from the long-lingering Greek colony of Marseilles. Greek words and Greek choral dances may to this day be heard and seen in the neighbourhood of the old Phocæan city ;\* and as late as the eleventh century there still remained in the Rouergue and the Toulousain, recollections of the Iliad and the Odyssey, which had been taught in the schools of southern Gaul up to the end of the fifth century.

From these sources, then,—early and almost contemporary songs, heathen Teutonic traditions, classical traditions, the colouring of the age given by the trouvère, and perhaps, though to a very slight degree, additions supplied by the trouvère's own imagination,—at last arose the complete *Chanson de Geste*, the full and elaborate portraiture of the chivalry of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A complete romance cycle, such as the Carolingian, deals with the life of its principal hero from the cradle to the grave,—from the prodigies which accompanied his birth to his final disappearance from the scene of his earthly exploits up that 'shining stair' by which, as repeated visions attested, the faithful knight, no less than the sainted monk or hermit, ascended to the joys of Paradise. History is remarkably silent as to the early life of Charles. Even Eginhard was unacquainted with the place of his birth, although he alludes to the great influence over him exercised by his mother, Bertha. The trouvères, however, as in duty bound, seized on all this period, and filled it up with a series of minute fictions, for which, from whatever sources they were elaborated, whether from early songs or from foreign and misapprehended traditions, it is difficult not to suppose that they had some historical foundation, however slight and indistinct. Berthe au Grand Pied, the mother of Charles the Great, was, according to the romances, a daughter of the King of Hungary. She is be-

\* Ampère, *Litt. de la France avant le 12<sup>m</sup>e Siècle*, t. i. p. 125.

trothed to Pepin, who charges the intendant of his palace to seek and bring her home. But this officer has a daughter precisely resembling Bertha. He substitutes her for the true princess; and whilst the 'false Florimel' becomes the wife of Pepin, Bertha is exposed in the great forest of Mans, where she wanders long in the utmost danger and distress, having, says the trouvère, neither 'gastiaux,' 'bescuit,' nor 'godale,'\* and being in great fear of the wild beasts, who would eat her, she declares, without the trouble of cooking—'plus tôt crue que cuite.' But the Lady Bertha is reserved for nobler destinies. She finds shelter and protection in the house of a miller, where she remains for many years, humble and unknown, yet winning all hearts by her simple truth and patience, until one day King Pepin, who has lost his way in the chase, arrives at the mill, and is struck with the great beauty of Bertha. She accepts his love, and seizes the opportunity of a nocturnal interview, like Mariana of the Moated Grange, to unfold her true story. From this point all goes well—the traitors are punished, Bertha is restored, and the birth of Charles is the result of King Pepin's chance visit to the solitary mill in the forest.

The romance of Bertha, simple and quaint as it is, is filled, like Shakespeare's 'As You Like It,' with the life and free air of the woods in which its scene is for the most part laid. No mere description could take us so completely into the heart of those vast forests, the jealously-preserved hunting-grounds of the old Karlings, where the wolf howled and the bison wandered, and where the great Auroch—King Arthur's 'Questing beast'—'stalked to its shaggy lair'

Through paths and alleys roofed with sombre green.

If the later romances give us the life of the warrior, we have here the face of the country, covered with its waste woods

\* Anglicè, 'good ale.'

and deserts, alike the retreats of saints and hermits and the lurking-places of broken men and outlaws. Bertha herself became the ideal of all womanly excellence: for 'domum mansit, lanam fecit,' was scarcely less the highest praise of a mediæval dame than of a Roman matron; and the spindle of 'la Reine Berthe' was her sceptre of happiness and prosperity. She is said to have founded the monastery of Saint Avelle—dedicated, in memory of her wanderings, to Our Lady of the Woods; and a mysterious figure, belonging in all probability to some earlier mythology—'la Reine Pedauque,'—whose one 'goosefoot' appears from beneath the long folds of her robe, became connected with her legend, and was placed among the queen 'nursing mothers' on the exteriors of many cathedrals. Such a statue, apparently of the eleventh century—nearly the time of the romance itself,—still exists above the great portal of the Cathedral of Le Mans.

After the death of Pepin, his two sons by the false Bertha seize the kingdom, and attempt to destroy Charles; who, still a child, escapes with difficulty to a monastery, and thence to the Court of Galafer, King of the Saracens, at Cordova. Here he remains for some years under the name of Mainet; responds to the love of Galerane, the Paynim's daughter, for whose bright eyes he performs his first deeds of valour, and finally carries her back with him into France, where he kills the usurpers, and recovers his kingdom. Such were the romance legends of the early youth of Charles the Great. The series which follows in order of time, belongs to that remarkable expedition to the Holy Land without which, in the estimation of the crusading centuries, the life of a great hero would have been altogether incomplete. How early these traditions had arisen, we have already seen. The extent of historical foundation for them seems to have been the negotiations which are recorded as having taken place be-

tween Charles and the Caliph Haroun, in order to procure greater liberty and security for the rapidly increasing numbers of Christian pilgrims. But it soon became universally believed that the great Emperor had himself visited Palestine, and had there wrested from the Saracens the holy relics of the Saviour's Passion. Even Urban II., according to that version of his famous speech at the Council of Clermont preserved by Robert the Monk, who was himself present there, held up to his audience the examples of Charles and of his son Lewis, like whom they were now called upon to march to the deliverance of Jerusalem, 'the royal city—the centre of the whole earth.'\* One entire romance yet remains, commemorating the journey of the Emperor; and allusions to it are scattered thickly through all the other series, interspersed with such various marvels and miracles as could hardly fail to occur in connexion with relics of so great value. The holy crown, made of a 'junc outre-marin,' thick-set with thorns of exceeding sharpness, blossomed afresh, as though in honour of so great a champion, when the shrine which contained it was opened for Charles's inspection. A savour as of Paradise filled all the place; and the bishop, severing a portion all green and fragrant, gave it to Charles, who, according to one trouvère, placed it in his glove, which remained miraculously suspended in the air until the shrine was again closed. The entire crown, the lance, and the nails, were brought to Rome by the Emperor, and deposited in the ancient Basilica of St. Peter. But there the romancers did not long suffer them to remain. According to them, Balan, an 'amiral' of the Spanish Saracens, despatched his son Ferabras, at the head of a formidable army, into Italy. He marched on Rome, took, and pillaged it, and carried off with him the glorious relics. In order to recover

\* Robertus Monachus, *Hist. Hierosolymitana*, ap. Bongars, *Gesta Dei per Francos*, t. i.



them, Charles and his paladins undertake a fresh expedition beyond the Pyrenees,—a crusade as completely without historical foundation as that to the Holy Land. But Spain, like Palestine, was sacred ground for the Christian hero ; and in the romances which belong to this expedition, together with those commemorating the more authentic ‘razzia’ of Roncevaux, we have the fullest and most complete pictures of the chivalry of the thirteenth century occurring throughout the whole series of Carolingian romance.

There were many causes which led to this great prominence given to the contest with the Spanish Arabs, as well by the *trouvères* of the *Langue d’Oïl* as by the *Provençal troubadours*. Charles the Great, it is true, crossed the Pyrenees but once ; but from the year 714, when the first Saracen host broke into Septimania, to the beginning of the eleventh century, when they attempted in vain to retake Narbonne, and finally abandoned Gaul, there was incessant strife between them and the Christians of the southern provinces,—a strife which from the beginning had assumed the character of a crusade, and which became more and more a war of religion as the time drew near for Clermont and Peter the Hermit. The knight who fell in battle with the Moors was not less sure of his reward than if he had been stricken under the walls of Acre or Jerusalem. ‘The King of Heaven,’ says the troubadour *Marcabrus*, ‘has mercifully provided for us a laver’ (*lavador*) ‘close at hand,—such an one as cannot be equalled on this side of the sea, or beyond it as far as the valley of *Jehoshaphat*.’ In this strife the Carolingian dynasty had been deeply engaged. Charles Martel had beaten back the Arabs from Poitiers, and had driven them from Provence and Septimania. Charles the Great sought them, though to less purpose, under the walls of Saragossa ; and afterwards, when the kingdom of Aquitaine, founded by him as an additional protection, had become broken and

divided, it was still the chiefs who had fought under, or revolted from, the banner of the Karlings, who continued the conflict with the sleepless southern invaders. Various races had taken part in these conflicts,—northern Franks, old Gallo-Romans of Provence and Aquitaine, Basques and Iberians of Vasconia and Navarre. The country was full of ancient and famous cities,—Nismes, Toulouse, Arles, Narbonne,—relics of Roman art and magnificence; nor were its natural features less calculated to nurse the spirit of poetry and romance. Between the hostile races rose perpetually that long chain of snowy peaks, glancing waterfalls, and fathomless precipices, the haunt of the eagle and the bear, among whose inaccessible recesses old Basque tradition placed the abode of mysterious spirits and demons, and whose awe-inspiring solitude is recognised in their ancient proverb, which asserts that ‘He who has never been in the “port” of the mountain, or on the sea, knows not how to worship God.’\* Through these ‘ports,’ the work, according to them, of Ionian magicians, aided by fire and vinegar, the Arab hosts came pouring down, with their striped ‘haiks’ and gilded lances glittering between the rocks, contributing, by the strangeness of their appearance, to the strong impression made by the whole nature of the contest, by the country itself, and by old national traditions. Nor was the Arab character itself without its influence. Charles the Great had formed with them other than hostile relations. The Saracen emir, Soliman-el-Arabi, accompanied by many Andalusian chiefs, was present at Paderborn, in the camp of ‘Karilah,’ as the Arab writers call him, when, in the year 777, the forced baptism of the revolted Saxons took place there. Their wreathed turbans

\* Fauriel, *Hist. de la Gaule Méridionale sous la Domination des Conquérants Germains*, iii. p. 64. ‘El Bortat,’—a name formed from the Basque ‘Portua,’ or ‘Ports,’ was that given by the Arabs to the whole chain. The passes were ‘El Abouab,’ the gates.

and damasked swords must have been sufficiently remarkable among the crowd of Frank warriors and priests; but the courtesy and spirit of honour which make Saladin himself one of the most perfect representations of the 'gentle knight,' were far from unknown among the Spanish Arabs, who seem to have given the first great lessons in these virtues to Christian Europe. Peaceful intercourse, no less than the accidents of war, contributed to spread their reputation. Many of the great southern monasteries had a certain number of ships belonging to them, which came up the streams of the Rhone and the Garonne laden with the red leather of Cordova, eastern gems and spiceries, and Arabian silks, brocaded in gold and bright colours,—materials for the rich cope or dalmatic; but which also brought with them stories of the refinement and courtesy of the 'heathen hounds' beyond the mountains. Of the direct manner in which the Saracen chivalry was recognised by the romancers, we have sufficient and remarkable proof.

Although the romances which commemorate the expedition of Charles to Spain for the recovery of the holy relics belong, in due order of time, to an earlier period, they do not, at least in the state in which we now possess them, exhibit traces of so great antiquity as the famous *Chanson de Roland*,—which title M. Michel has ventured to assign to the Roncevaux romance printed by him from its earliest text in the Bodleian Library. Whether this be indeed the war-song 'of Roland and of Oliver' which the Jongleur Taillefer sang at Hastings as he rode before the Norman soldiers tossing his sword into the air, is, perhaps, not capable of proof; but there are certain peculiarities which render it at least probable,—such, for instance, as the shout of 'Aoi! aoi!' with which the long mono rhymed divisions are occasionally terminated. Of the whole series of romances connected with Spain, this of Roncevaux is probably the earliest. The famous expedition



of Charles the Great—undertaken, as it has been suggested, with the design of confining the Arabs beyond the line of the Ebro, of securing in Christian hands the passes of the mountains, and thus of checking the constant forays of the Saracens—was perhaps of far greater importance than the brief notices of it in the chronicles would at first lead us to suspect. It is, at least, certain that the two bodies of troops which crossed the mountains, one by the defiles of the Eastern Pyrenees, the other by the passes from St. Jean de Luz, were collected from all the races of the empire, and made up an enormous army. Of the failure of the expedition,—the unexpected check at Saragossa, which Soliman-el-Arabi, the same emir who had been present at Paderborn, had undertaken to deliver into the hands of ‘Karilah,’—and the ultimate rout at Roncevaux, where the Frankish army, in Eginhard’s gentle words, ‘slightly experienced the perfidy of the Basques,’—we know too little to speak with any degree of certainty. Yet this fatal defeat, whatever may have been its real importance, made from the very first a deep impression on the minds of the Gallic population. Rude songs and ballads connected with it existed from a very early period, and formed the groundwork at once of the *Chanson de Roland* and of the prose chronicle of the pseudo-Turpin. The story contained the germ of that deep religious significance which afterwards became more and more connected with all combats against the Moors. Roncevaux was to the Christians what Poitiers had been to the Arabs,—‘Balat el Choadah,’—the ‘Path of Martyrs’; and Roland, who fell there, was made the type of all knightly virtue and devotion. Even Saint James, ‘Patron y Capitan-general de las Españas,’ himself the active protector of the country against the infidels, was indebted for numberless pilgrims to his shrine at Compostella to the devotion excited by the fate of Roland and his peers, as set forth in the monastic romance of the pseudo-

Turpin, which is said to have been compiled with this especial object toward the close of the twelfth century.

The Roncevaux songs and romances were probably the germs from which sprang the series of pure fictions relating to the expedition for the relics. In both we have assembled the whole famous group of the 'douze pairs,'—each of whose characters is rudely, yet distinctly marked, from the recreant knight, Ganelon the Betrayer, to the venerable Duke Naymes, the 'πολυμητις Οδύσσευς' of the company. The central figure is that of Charles himself, now fully developed, and invested with all the various attributes derived from a long and diversified string of traditional sources. The 'Charlemagne' thus presented to us by the romancers is, in many respects, remarkable. The actual position of the historic monarch had been in a great degree exceptional. It was by the force of his individual character alone that he had so completely succeeded during his lifetime in mastering all the powers of Christendom. No succeeding monarch fills so completely the entire historical canvas, to the exclusion of all the lesser chiefs and nobles. What is called the feudal system was as yet but in progress of development, and the dukes and 'comites' who assembled at the Easter plaids felt each one the direct influence of the Emperor's unbending will, against which he found it altogether vain to struggle. It was this unlimited power which had raised him to the height of an ideal personage; but it was not thus that the romancers could see him. To them he was the Capetan monarch of their own time,—more powerful, indeed, but surrounded, like him, by mighty vassals, scarcely less kinglike or independent. For the trouvère could no more conceive of 'Charlemagne' and Roland otherwise than as the feudal king and baron of the twelfth century, than Brother Anselm or Brother Hildebrand could image to himself Saul or David combating with any other arms than the steel-ringed hauberk, pointed helmet, and broad Norman sword, in which

fashion his hand had so cunningly depicted them upon the pages of his great Monastery Bible.

As though by way of compensation for the real power of which they had deprived him, the romancers confer on Charles the Great certain other attributes of a far more marvellous character. He becomes, in their hands, the representative of those mighty old giants of the North, one class of whom was held to be as well disposed toward the ordinary race of mortals as the other was hostile. Like Starkodder, the Norwegian champion, whose tooth served for the clapper of a church bell, Charlemagne is of enormous size and stature; yet '*gent ad li cors*,'—there is nothing deformed or ungainly, and such is the native majesty of his countenance, that the stranger who once looks on it has no occasion to ask who he is. His beard, white as hawthorn or the laurel-flower, falls below his waist, like Thor's; and when he is enraged or anxious, it is his habit to stroke and pull it, in due Oriental fashion, and to twist his long '*gernuns*,' or moustaches. No wonder that his beard is white and his head '*tut flurit*.' Like Nestor, or like Hildebrand, the champion of Theodoric, his years have long exceeded the usual limits of the life of man. He has been two hundred years in Spain when the defeat of Roncevaux takes place, thus spending nearly his whole lifetime in combating the Moors,—for '*in my judgment*,' says Marsilie, '*amiral*' of Saragossa, the romance representative of Soliman-el-Arabi, '*dous cenx anz ad e mielz*.' His famous sword '*Joyeuse*,' with its inscription, '*Decem præceptorum custos Carolus*'; his spear, which was never lifted against an enemy but it was sure to give a fatal wound, and which became confused with the holy lance of Longinus, brought back by him from Palestine; the banner of St. Maurice and the Theban legion, always borne before him, and always striking a mysterious terror into the hearts of the infidels,—assist in making up the

picture ; which, it must not be forgotten, was received by the Jongleur's audience as perfectly authentic,—none the less so on account of its marvels, for 'God,' in the words of Biorn of Drontheim, when attempting to account for the good swords and supernatural armour of the old heroes of the *Wilkins Saga*, 'was well able to bestow all these things on them, and even as much again.' With all this, however, Charles himself takes little or no active part in the romances. Grand, solemn, and almost supernatural, he fills the central place. The inspiration and the glory stream from him. But the deeds of strength and of daring, the single combats and adventurous expeditions, are undertaken by the chiefs and paladins who surround him, and who, in their turn, are not less marvellously favoured and endowed. They are, in short, great feudal barons, with a colouring drawn from the stores of an older religion, just as Charlemagne is the feudal monarch, with the attributes of Thor or of Odin.

All the 'douze pairs,' with the single exception of Ganelon, are faithful to Charlemagne. But the great pattern of fidelity, as of most other knightly virtues, is Roland. He it is who exhorts the others, in their greatest difficulties,—when the countless host of the Saracens is approaching, and the destruction of the Christian seems inevitable—

Ben devuns ci estre pur nostre rei ;  
Pur son seignor deit hom suffreir destreiz  
E endurer e granz chalz e granz freiz.

Never, he continues, let a 'malvaise cançon' be sung of us, who have the right on our side. But great as is the advance beyond the rude chiefs of Gregory of Tours, and even of the Nibelungen-lied, the paladins of 'Charlemagne' still exhibit a certain ruggedness of character very far removed from the *gentillesse* of the Black Prince or of the 'sans reproche' Bayard. True, they are combating the infidel sons of Mahoun, with whom no faith was to be kept ; yet it is a striking proof

of the extent to which Arabian chivalry must have influenced that of southern Europe, that the most remarkable example of knightly courtesy occurring throughout all these romances should be assigned, not to Roland, nor even to Charles the Great, but to the Saracen giant Ferabras, during his combat with the paladin Oliver. The Romance of Ferabras is one of many which must have existed commemorating the Spanish expedition in quest of the holy relics, but almost the only one now remaining. Few of the Carolingian series had a wider reputation;\* and even Don Quixote's niece and housekeeper could not find it in their hearts to commit it to the flames. Ferabras himself, who, at the end of the combat, touched by supernatural grace, and by the arguments of Oliver, declares his readiness to embrace the Christian faith, is the romance representative of the true or 'faithful' giant, well known to old Northern tradition, just as St. Christopher represented him in the more solemn legends of the cloister.†

The religious element, never altogether absent in these Saracen romances, appears curiously in the sudden conversion of the giant; too courteous a personage, as it would seem, to be allowed to remain a worshipper of 'Bafom' and 'Mahoun.' In the Roncevaux 'chanson' it is conspicuous throughout; and perhaps the most striking scene to be met with in the whole range of romance is that which occurs after the fatal battle, where Roland, mortally wounded, drags himself over the field, and gathering, one by one, the bodies of the 'douze pairs,' arranges them, kneeling as though still alive, before the Archbishop Turpin, who has just strength to pronounce his absolution before he, too, sinks down beside them. Thus Roland is left alone, the only survivor of all that mighty

\* Robert Bruce, during the famous night-passage of Loch Lomond, read to his followers the Story of Ferabras.—Barbour's *Bruce*, b. ii., v. 832.

† Grimm, *D. Mythol.* 496.

host; and then follows the attempt to break his sword, Durendal, 'the heavy striker,' in which he only succeeds in splitting the rock from top to bottom. The entire passage curiously exhibits the working of *trouvère* after *trouvère*, each having added in succession his own version of Roland's address to his sword. It displays so well the general character of these romances, that it is worth while to attempt a translation of some portion of it, including the death of Roland. The 'olifan,' which 'Charlemagne' hears beyond the mountains, has already been sounded :—

Then once again Sir Roland struck the block of Sardine stone,  
Where on the mountain-side he stood, of all that host, alone.  
Loud rang the brand, yet brake not ; no splinter fell away—  
No fragment bright and glittering on the ground beside him lay.  
And when he saw no strength of arm might burst the brand in twain,  
With a low and mournful voice, Sir Roland spake again :—  
' Ah, Durendal, my sword ! thou art fair, and clear, and bright ;  
How thou shinest in the sun like a ray of fiery light !  
King Charles he sat alone, in the country of the Moor,  
When an angel of the Lord stood that mighty king before,  
And he bore thee, Durendal, thou sword of fiery glance,  
And he said the King should gird with thee a noble peer of France :  
So Charles the gentle King, who was ever first in fight,  
Girt thee firmly to my side in all the douze-peers' sight.  
And I won with thee, my sword, both Namon and Bretagne,  
And all the land of Poitou, and all the land of Maine ;  
And the Norman saw thee shining, and the Lombard on his plain,  
And the fields of fair Provence, and the hills of Aquitaine ;  
And we won the woods of Brabant, and Flanders by the sea,  
And Rome, that mighty city, and all wide Burgundy.  
Constantinople heard thy strokes upon the hawberks ring,  
And we made the Saxon people bend low before the King ;  
All the cities and the countries we won with many a blow,  
Where ruleth Charles the King, whose beard is white as snow.  
And now for thee, mine own good sword, the tears are falling down,  
That I must die, and leave thee in the country of Mahoun ;—  
Thou who sittest in the heavens—Thou who watchest from on high—  
Save the realm of France, I pray Thee, from shame and villany !'

Then once again Sir Roland struck the Sardine stone with might,  
Till sparks flew round about him like the shooting stars at night ;

Loud rang the noble brand, yet no splinter fell away—  
 No fragment bright and glittering on the ground beside him lay.  
 And when he saw no strength of arm might burst the brand in twain,  
 All softly to himself, Sir Roland spake again :—  
 ‘ Ah, Durendal, my sword ! thou holy sword, and fair,  
 Within thy hilt of gold lie relics strange and rare :  
 The blood of holy Basil—the robe of Saint Marie—  
 And Saint Denys’ hair, who aideth us in our extremity ;  
 It fitteth not that heathen men should bind thee to their side,—  
 Thou oughtest in a Christian land for ever to abide.  
 It fitteth not that godless men should win thee, sword of mine,  
 Who didst smite the heathen Saxons, beyond the river Rhine,—  
 Who didst conquer all the lands where ruleth Charles the King,  
 Whose beard is long and white, like the laurel-flower in spring.’

Beneath a lofty pine-tree, Count Roland dying lay,  
 The sun shone o’er the Spanish land, toward the close of day ;  
 And he thought of pleasant France, and the cities walled high,  
 And how of old he won broad lands, fighting valiantly,—  
 And of Charles the King, his master, he who girt him with the sword,  
 And of the Lady Alda—she who pledged to him her word.  
 He might not choose but weep, for he knew his end was nigh,  
 And evermore for mercy he called to God on high :—  
 ‘ Oh, holy Father of the world, to Thee I cry this day,  
 Who didst Lazarus call forth from the tomb wherein he lay,  
 Who of old preservedst Daniel within the lion’s den,—  
 Thou Helper of the sorrowful—Thou Keeper of all men,—  
 Save my spirit from the evil one, and blot out all the crimes,  
 Whilst the life was in my body, wrought against Thee oftentimes.’  
 And then, to prove his words were true, he flung his gauntlet high,  
 Where Saint Michael the Archangel watched o’er him silently.—  
 With his sword beside him laid, about the closing of the day,  
 And his palms together on his breast, his spirit passed away.  
 But God sent down His angels, a bright and burning train,  
 With Michael, who doth guard the ships upon the stormy main,—  
 And to the gates of Paradise, with hymns and harpings high,  
 They bore the spirit of the Count. God grant us so to die !

Thus fell Roland the Good—the ‘ wall of clerks ’—the  
 ‘ staff of orphans ’—the ‘ tongue,’ like Thomas of Ercildoune,  
 that ‘ knew not how to lie.’ A hermit, from his cell in a dis-  
 tant wilderness—so the legend asserted—beheld the vision of  
 angels, and heard the celestial music with which his spirit  
 was conveyed to the regions of the blest. So St. Maurus, at

Auxerre, had seen in an ecstasy the lighted way by which Benedict of Nursia had ascended, after his death at Monte Casino. Like Charles himself, Roland was an inheritor of many marvels connected with the Old Northern Champions, and, as in their case, his fall is succeeded by earthquake, storm, and thunder.\* But in no respect is the influence of Christianity on the national literature, and on the heroic ideal, more strongly marked than in such a death-scene as this at Roncevaux. The Greek hero, let his toils be what they might, could look to no reward after they were ended—

*‘Ψυχή δ’ ἦντ’ δειρος ἀποταμένη πεπονηται.*

Even the joys of the Northern warrior in his Valhalla were but shadowy. But when the faithful champion of Christendom had fallen on his last battle-field, his happiness was only commencing ; and the paladins of Roncevaux became a great army of martyrs, whose blood had been shed in defence of all that was true and right. White and red roses, so it was believed, sprang up over all the field, and shed their fragrance through the mountain valley. Roland was gradually invested with every conceivable chivalric virtue ; and over the whole scene of his death a half-saddened, half-triumphant character was thrown, till its touches of tender feeling, in the midst of the surrounding strife and grimness, remind us of the delicate leafage and flower carvings that here and there shine out from their capitals through the solemn gloom of some vast old Gothic cathedral.

The chivalry of ‘le bon Troyen Ector’—the strength of Samson—the ‘gentil cœur, loyal et preu,’ of Judas Maccabæus—even the wisdom of Solomon—are all bestowed on Roland in the rhymed chronicle of Philippe Mouskes, toward the middle of the thirteenth century. But although the old Canon

\* Grimm, *D. Mythol.*



of Tournay may seem to have painted a very complete picture of the perfect knight, one type yet remains which was not represented by Roland. Don Jorge de Manrique, in those famous 'Coplas' which are to this day popular in Spain, places side by side the two modes of life which in mediæval estimation were held especially to merit the Divine favour,—that of the monk in his cell, and that of the knight spent in combating the Moors. Distinct as they appear, a tendency to the union of the two was very early exhibited. It finally resulted in the formation of the religious orders of knight-hood; but its first indications appear in the lives of those early chieftains who, after a long career of war and tumult, retired to end their days within the walls of some peaceful monastery. The knight thus, to use a remarkable expression, '*sub baltheo aureo amorem Dei retinens*,' is eminently a figure of Carolingian times. In the romance of that cycle he is represented by 'Guillaume au Court-Nez,' 'Guillaume de Toulouse,' 'Guillaume d'Orange,' 'Guillaume le Moine'—for by all these names, and many more, he is known—'*li meillor home qui onc bêust de vin*' of the trouvères, the '*jejunii amator*, in *vigiliis pervigil*' of the monks. Throughout, the romances of Guillaume rest on historical foundations. After the Roncevaux defeat, William, who had long been a constant companion of the Emperor, was appointed Count of Toulouse; and—during the fresh stream of Arab invasion under El Hakem, 'Modzafer,' the Victorious—his name is always conspicuous until the fall of Barcelona and the establishment of a Christian seigneury beyond the mountains, the germ of the future Catalonia. He then disappears for a time; but only to emerge into greater celebrity as the founder of a monastery in the valley of Gelona, one of the wildest in the Cevennes, the church of which, Byzantine in character, and decorated with marbles probably obtained from the ruined temples of Nismes, still exists to remind the visitor of the

once-renowned Count William. The little patches of earth lying between the rocks that everywhere break upwards along the steep sides of the glen, were carefully cultivated by the Count-abbot and his monks. Vineyards and cornfields took the place of rough fern and brushwood ; and the last glimpse which his monastic biographer affords us of the former scourge of the Saracens exhibits him mounted on his 'asellus,' and carrying at his saddle a great flask of wine for the benefit of the exhausted reapers in the harvest-field.

The life of 'Saint Guillaume du Desert'—one of his many names, and that by which his monastery is still known—was in itself so remarkable, and displayed so strikingly the characteristics of the monastic warrior, that we can hardly wonder at finding him selected as the grand representative of this especial type of chivalry. His fame was spread by monk as well as by jongleur, since he belonged equally to both.\* When the chaplain of Hugh of Avranches, the Conqueror's Earl of Chester, was instructing the knights and soldiers who thronged his master's castles in the deeds of the warriors of the Old Testament, and of their later Christian imitators, George and Demetrius, Theodore and Sebastian, Maurice and Eustace, he used also to add something concerning the 'holy athlete' William, to whom the Emperor Charles had bequeathed his noble sword 'Joyeuse.' Ordericus Vitalis, who records this, also tells us that although many jongleur songs existed on the same subject, 'the authentic relation' of the monks was to be preferred, from which he has himself compiled the short life of St. William, inserted in his history.

The incidental notice thus afforded us by Ordericus as to the character of the sermons in Earl Hugh's chapels, is a curious illustration of the manner in which, from an unex-

\* In the romances, his religious character is supported by long prayers—each a summary of biblical history,—which he recites before every great battle.

pected quarter, the ideal chivalry of romance was brought to bear on that of actual life. Earl Hugh's chaplain no doubt handled the matter somewhat differently from Adènes, the 'King of the Minstrels,' or from Turolde, the 'maker' of the Roncevaux Chanson. But the groundwork of both monk and trouvère was the same; and the effect of the latter's romances—bolder, more varied, more brightly coloured—must have been at least as powerful as that of the soberer teaching of the Churchman. If we would thoroughly understand how far the tales of 'haute emprise,' the 'Lays' of Roland and of William were really calculated to affect an audience in recital, we must forget the well-printed volumes from which we now read them at our firesides; we must even dismiss the original dusky manuscript, with its borders of griffins and strawberry-blossoms, and its capitals of burnished gold and vermeil. In their stead, call up the great hall of some Norman 'ferte,' whose smoke-stained walls are bristling with hawberks and lances, dented in many a fray, and reddened on many a battle-field. All the 'following' of the baron is there assembled. Near the chief himself, and on the dais, sits the jongleur, who has claimed shelter for the night, and who is declaiming to his harp the old song of Roncevaux. See the flushed brows and the kindling eyes of his listeners—see how each sword-hilt is half-unconsciously grasped—and listen to that fierce shout, stirring the banners on the walls, the 'Aoi!' with which the minstrel concludes his 'branche' before he sets down his harp, and drains his horn of mead or spiced piment. Or take another scene—under the great plane-tree below the walls of some fortalice in Gascony or Aquitaine. The minstrel is telling the same old tale; and far off in the distance rise those very mountain passes where his scene is laid—or it may be, nearer at hand,

The splendour of the setting sun  
Streams on thy mirrored wave, Garonne,  
And Blaye's empurpled shore.

Blaye—where Roland himself is resting, with his sword beside him and his horn at his feet. But whether in the 'worm-eaten hold' of the Norman baron, or beneath the glowing sky of the south, the same spell is in the strain, the same magic in the singer. His song is alive; and if it tells of deeds many hundred years old, its spirit is that of the present hour—of those who are at this moment listening to it. Roland is dead, and all his peers; but there are brave knights still in the world and honour is still to be won. The children of Mahoun and Termagaunt are still there beyond the mounfains, and the Saracen dogs are still polluting the soil of the holiest of lands. 'Aoi!' shout the knights. 'For France and for Saint Denys! We will throw in our lots with Roland—we will fall with our faces towards the Moors—and St. Michael aid us in our extremity!'

The extreme warlike excitement which these romances were calculated to produce cannot for an instant be doubted. Urban II. and St. Bernard must have found them excellent coadjutors. But, in their later forms at least, they taught more than this; and it is not a little interesting to trace the gradual addition of nobler qualities to the 'strength of Samson'—the great distinction of a rude age,—on which the earlier songs for the most part dwell. To this addition the Churchmen greatly contributed; until, indeed, their ideal of the Christian knight rose far beyond any actual illustration which can be produced from the stories of the trouvères. Such, for instance, is the speech which the Canon of Tournay has placed in the mouth of Charles the Great—a lament over his nephew Roland.\* The excellences, in short, which at

\* *Chron. of Philippe Mouskes*, edited by M. de Reiffenberg, t. i. p. 330.

last came to be showered on Roland and his peers were so great, and as the age of the Crusades advanced, the manner of their death appeared so glorious, that they were eventually raised to all the dignity, and surrounded by all the emblems, of actual saints of the Church. In one of the magnificent stained windows of the Cathedral of Chartres, Roland, his head encircled with the saintly nimbus, is represented in the act of cleaving the 'sardine-stone' with Durendal, whilst the Divine Hand, in the ancient Byzantine manner, is seen extended to him from the clouds. The lives of St. Roland and his companions were inserted in monastic hagiographies, side by side with those of the saints of the cloister. Among the oaks and cork-trees scattered over the opening of the pass of Roncevaux, a small convent was founded, in the church of which the crowd of pilgrims, on their way to Compostella, paid due homage to the memory of the douze pairs. The great 'pantouffles' (archiepiscopal sandals?) of Turpin were shown there; and from the walls were hung the heavy chains of iron which had guarded the position of the Moorish Caliph at the famous battle of Navas de Tolosa, when the white horse of Santiago himself had led on the Christians to their victory. Within this chapel the Black Prince must have knelt and thought of Roland, when, together with Don Pedro, he passed through these 'straytes and perylous passages under the mountaynes,' as Froissart calls them, before the fight of Navarrete. The convent itself was not unhonoured in England; where the cell of St. Mary Rounceval—which stood on the site of Northumberland House, in the Strand—was anciently attached to it. Whether owing to an English desire of connecting our own great romance cycle with this famous spot, or to some more primitive tradition, it was at Montsalvaez (Salvatierra), also on the high road to Compostella, and within a short distance of Roncevaux, that the Sangraal was said to have been preserved in the mys-

terious temple, where Sir Percival, the Roland of King Arthur's company, alone, of all his brethren, was permitted to discover it.\* Roncevaux, however, could not boast the actual resting-place of any one of the douze pairs. Charles himself, at the head of his army, sought their bodies, and conveyed them reverently back into 'douce France'—'the best of all the hundred kingdoms into which God had divided the world.' But even there, so great was the desire to possess their tombs and relics, that scarcely a district of France can be mentioned which did not at some time, or in some manner, claim them. In the church of St. Faro, at Méaux, was long shown the tomb of Ogier, with whose story that of Holger, the champion of the elder Edda, was early connected; and who, as other legends asserted, following the true history of Count William, closed his career as abbot of the monastery there. His cowed figure, bearing a staff hung with bells, lay stretched at full length above; whilst round the sides of the tomb were ranged Roland and the other peers, with Charles himself, carrying a branch of lilies for a sceptre. Over the tomb hung an enormous sword and shield, said to have been those with which Ogier, before his death at Roncevaux, in company with John the Priest (Prester John), son of Adgillus, King of Friezeland, had conquered the remotest regions of Asia, and founded there that mysterious kingdom which afterwards became so famous.† Other legends asserted that he and his brethren were buried at Rousillon, at St. Michael's Mount, or in the Aliscamp, or 'Campi Elisei,' the great cemetery of Roman Arles, held in especial honour throughout the middle ages, from its containing so many tombs of martyrs who had fallen in combating

'Païen et Sarrazin  
Tur et Persant et felon Bedoïn.'

\* Price's *Warton* (Pref.), p. 82.

† The tomb is figured in Mabillon, *Annales Ord. Bened.*

It was thought that sometimes, when the thunder broke and the lightning streamed across the plain of the ancient cemetery, the gigantic figures of the 'douze pairs' could be seen, hovering over the 'fields of their rest,' and leading upward a long train of less distinguished champions. A tradition, however, which never seems to have varied, asserted that Roland, the best and greatest of the company, lay buried at Blaye, on the bank of the Garonne, opposite Bordeaux. There he was placed in a tomb, which, in order to keep up his reputation as a giant, was said to be only as long as his knees, with his sword at his head and his horn at his feet. On the tomb was an inscription composed by Charles the Great, his uncle; and some pieces of armour were preserved in the church which had belonged to Roland himself, and which Francis the First, before setting out on the fatal expedition to Pavia, is said to have tried on, and to have found exactly fitting to his size. To see this armour and to reverence Roland's tomb, an annual pilgrimage was made by all the inhabitants of the district. Yet Durendal, the sword of swords, the great treasure of the place, had, it was believed, been removed at a very early period from its place beside the head of its master,—if, indeed, it had ever been laid there. The swords of heroes had as great a tendency to multiply as the remains of the most honoured saints, and none was coveted more eagerly than this of Roland. It was shown in nearly as many places as the relics of St. Barbara, or of St. Ursula's virgins; and each of the exhibitors maintained the authenticity of their own Durendal with equal zeal and courage. At Roc-Amador, a famous place of pilgrimage near Gourdon in Quercy, it was hung up in the chapel of St. Michael, one of a cluster built on either side the steps leading up to a chapel of the Virgin, whence the eye ranges over the long valley below, lying like a narrow green thread between its walls of rock. In passing this place on his way to Roncevaux, Roland,

it was said, had offered to the Virgin a mass of silver equal in weight to Durendal, and soon after his death his sword was removed here from Blaye.\* Another Durendal was exhibited in the Treasury of St. Denys,—and another at Liège,—but the most remarkable of all was that which hung at the gate of the castle of Prusa (the modern Brusa), in Anatolia, in the path of the Crusaders from Constantinople, and which was shown by the Turks as that of Roland the ‘Saracen,’ who had some Frank blood in his veins, as, indeed, had all the Turks, but who was nevertheless one of their own most renowned and invincible heroes.†

Whilst his paladins were thus honoured, Charles himself had been raised more solemnly to his place among the celestial company.‡ His tomb at Aachen was the sacred, strength-giving spot to which the eyes of the German emperors were turned when fighting their own battles against the Papal Hildebrands and Innocents. Otho the Third had opened it, and had beheld the great emperor—still erect on his throne, his face bandaged, and the crown on his head; and Frederick Barbarossa had hung over it a jewelled crown in token of his reverence. Throughout northern Europe, as in the south, older national traditions became connected with those of King Karl and his peers. The mystic banner, which, as the legends of Friezeland asserted, had been given by the patriarch Shem to Friso, was said to have assisted Charles the Great in his conquest of Rome, and then to have been hung up in the church of Harlingen, where it was long shown.§ The ‘Foresters of Flanders’ claimed kindred with Roland; and his armour, including another Durendal, was worn by Jean, Sire de

\* *Bulletin Monumental*, t. xix. (1853.)

† Heerken's *Eginhard*, ap. De Reiffenberg's *Ph. Mouskes*. For the Turkish claim to a Frank origin, see Baudri of Dôle. (*Bib. des Croisades*, i. 23.) Prusa was the first seat of the Ottoman sultans.

‡ The office for his festival was taken from Turpin. (Mart. and Durand. *Voy. Litt.* p. 202.) § Kempius, *Frisia*, p. 188.



Gavre, in 1297, at the battle of Bulscamp.\* Further north, 'Holger Danske' took his place among the paladins, as we have already seen. Everywhere the ancient figures of Justice with her scales, or of the goddess Fortune, set up in the public places of the towns, were connected with the name of Roland, as were the great bells and ward horns which sounded in time of need from the summits of the watch-towers. In the Ardennes and the deep woods of Northern France, the great Charles took the place of Odin, and became lord of the 'wüthend heer'—the wild host of the dead. Roland, his chief hero, follows him when he sweeps along at midnight under the boughs, as Dunar followed Odin.† There was no part of Europe, however remote or uncivilized, into which the Carolingian romances did not penetrate. Even in Iceland the sagas of Nial and of Egils were occasionally varied by those of King Karl and his 'cappar'; and in return for Salvæz in the Pyrenees, Wales had the 'Ystoria Carlymaen' to insert among her stories of Brut and of Arthur. Carved ornaments in churches and monasteries, ivory caskets and mirrors, paintings on the walls of royal palaces and of ladies' bowers, all contributed to spread their reputation. The great emperor appears under the most unlooked-for forms and in the most unexpected situations—never more startlingly than as 'the club's black tyrant,'

Who of all monarchs only grasps the globe,—

and who, as neither Belinda nor Sir Plume, when engaged in all the mysteries of the 'verdant plain,' were the least aware, is no other than King Karl.

In this manner the names of Charles the Great and of Roland had become widely famous in Italy before passing into new life and reputation in the verses of Boiardo and Ariosto. Here, however, we must not follow them; nor must

\* Kervyn de Lettenhove. *H. de Flandre*, ii. 57.

† Grimm, *D. Mythol.*

we venture into that later period, when the metrical romances had been exchanged for massive prose folios, still pored over by the Egmonts and the Montmorencis, and when the older chivalry, changing with the changing age, whilst it displayed additional splendour, was nevertheless dying out in its ancient forms, to reappear in that manner and after those fashions which it has ever since more or less retained, and of which the influences, it may be hoped, 'mingling with and softened by purer religion, will be the imperishable heirloom of social man.'\*

\* Milman's *Lat. Christ.* iii. 256.

## II.

### SACRED TREES AND FLOWERS.\*

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‘IT was never a merry world,’ said the learned Selden, ‘since the fairies left off dancing, and the parsons left off conjuring.’ What amount of merriness might return to us if the parsons could be persuaded to resume their conjuring caps, we can hardly foresee ; but we are sure there are a thousand good reasons for regretting the fairies. To say nothing of such substantial comforters as fairy aunts and godmothers—who are but distant cousins of the true small people—how much poetry has left the world since Oberon and Titania

‘Danced full oft in many a grene mead,’

and the cowslips were the pensioners of the fairy queen ! In those days there was scarcely a flower in wood or on river bank but had its mysterious connection with the elfin world, or with a spirit-land yet more antique and shadowy. Hardly a tree in the greenwood—from the great oak of Thor to the elder with its white blossoms glimmering through the shade—but had its wild legends, its marvellous properties, and sometimes its special ghostly protector. Now-a-days, though the flowers are as bright, and the greenwood, though scarcely as wide-spreading, is yet as pleasant and as varied as ever, the elf is but rarely seen under the blossoms, and even the memory and the honours of Boscobel are fading away from the royal oak. The belief, which in those old days gave life to the wood-land and forest, has disappeared with Oberon and

\* *Quarterly Review*, July, 1863.

Titania. Yet, 'mansit odor.' Like Aubrey's Cirencester ghost, the small people have not vanished from middle earth without leaving a 'curious perfume' behind them ; and it is still possible to trace their ancient presence, not only by the dark rings on the sward, but by the mark set by them on many a plant and flower, sometimes in the names which still cling to them, and sometimes in the shape of lingering folklore and tradition. In this way

'The flower-inwoven mantle of the earth'

has become a sort of palimpsest—an illuminated page on which the signs of many different ages lie half-concealed, one above another. Underneath the characters of the fairies lie those of the great old Northern deities—Woden, and Thor, and Freya ; and deeper still, those of the more ancient world into which they intruded—the world of Pæon, the physician of Olympus, who bestowed his name on the peony ; and of Helen of Troy, whose virtues, if not her beauty, are commemorated in the helenium or elecampane, 'of which herbe,' says old Gerarde, 'she had her hands full when she was carried off.' The deciphering of these overlying characters, if not always an easy, is for the most part a pleasant task, and one that leads us to some of the most famous of the world's centres, and into many of its most lovely nooks and corners.

For the origin of the mysterious reverence with which certain trees and flowers were anciently regarded, and of 'tree-worship,' properly so called, we must go back to that primæval period into which comparative mythology has of late afforded us such remarkable glimpses ; when the earth, to its early inhabitants, seemed not only 'appareled in celestial light,' but when every part of creation seemed to be endowed with a strange and conscious vitality. When rocks and mountains, the most apparently lifeless and unchanging of the world's features, were thus regarded and were personified in common

language, it would have been wonderful if its more lifelike—the great rivers that fertilised it, and the trees, with their changing growth and waving branches, that clothed it—should have been disregarded and unhonoured. Accordingly, sacred rivers and sacred trees appear in the very earliest mythologies which have been recovered, and linger among the last vestiges of heathenism, long after the advent of a purer creed. Either as direct objects of worship, or as forming the temple under whose solemn shadow other and remoter deities might be adored, there is no part of the world in which trees have not been regarded with especial reverence :—

‘ In such green palaces the first kings reigned ;  
Slept in their shade, and angels entertained.  
With such old counsellors they did advise,  
And by frequenting sacred shades, grew wise.’

Paradise itself, says Evelyn, was but a kind of ‘ nemorous temple or sacred grove,’ planted by God Himself, and given to man ‘ *tanquam primo sacerdoti* ’ ; and he goes on to suggest that the groves which the patriarchs are recorded to have planted in different parts of Palestine, may have been memorials of that first tree-shaded paradise from which Adam was expelled.

How far the religious systems of the great nations of antiquity were affected by the record of the Creation and Fall preserved in the opening chapters of Genesis, it is not perhaps possible to determine. There are certain points of resemblance which are at least remarkable, but which we may assign, if we please, either to independent tradition, or to a natural development from the mythology of the earliest or primæval period. The Trees of Life and of Knowledge are at once suggested by the mysterious sacred tree which appears in the most ancient sculptures and paintings of Egypt and Assyria, and in those of the remoter East. In the symbolism of these nations the sacred tree sometimes figures as a type of the

universe, and represents the whole system of created things, but more frequently as a 'tree of life,' by whose fruit the votaries of the gods are nourished with divine strength, and are prepared for the joys of immortality. The most ancient types of this mystical tree of life are the date-palm, the fig, and the pine, or cedar. Of these, the earliest of which any representation occurs is the palm—the true date-palm of the valley of the Nile and of the great alluvial plain of ancient Babylonia—a tree which is exceeded in size and dignity by many of its congeners, but which is spread over at least two of the great centres of ancient civilisation, and which, besides its great importance as a food-producer, has a special beauty of its own when the clusters of dates are hanging in golden ripeness under its coronal of dark-green leaves. It is figured as a tree of life on an Egyptian sepulchral tablet, certainly older than the 15th century B.C., and now preserved in the Museum at Berlin. Two arms issue from the top of the tree, one of which presents a tray of dates to the deceased, who stands in front, whilst the other gives him water, 'the water of life.' The arms are those of the goddess Nepte, who appears at full length in other and later representations. In another scene, figured by Rosellini, where several generations of a distinguished family are receiving nourishment from the tree of life, one of the fig-trees is the type selected—the *Ficus sycamorus*—the sycamore-tree of Scripture. As in the former example, the goddess rises from the top of the tree, with a tray of figs in one hand, and pouring a stream of water from a vase held in the other.\* Another species of fig, the peepul (*Ficus religiosa*), is the sacred tree of India, and is revered alike by Brahmans and by Buddhists. Under it Vishnu was born; and when Brahma appointed the various monarchs of

\* For these illustrations, and for one or two which follow, see a paper by Dr. Barlow on the 'Tree of Life,' in the *Journal of Sacred Literature* for October, 1862.

beasts, of birds, and of plants, all of whom were 'instruments for the preservation of the world,' the holy fig-tree became the sovereign of the trees. Perhaps the oldest historical tree in the world is one of these figs. The 'Victorious, Illustrious, Supreme Lord, the sacred Bo tree' of Anarajapoorā in Ceylon, was, as can certainly be shown, planted 288 years B.C., and is now therefore 2160 years old. It was reared from a branch sent to Ceylon from Magadha, which miraculously severed itself from what was held to be the identical fig-tree under which Gotama Buddha was reclining when he underwent his apotheosis. Kings have dedicated their dominions to it; and from the very beginning this wonderful tree has been religiously guarded, and protected by a stone enclosure. Its present aspect, says Sir Emerson Tennent, suggests the idea of extreme antiquity, and many of its branches have been protected by rude pillars of masonry, themselves of great age.\* The sacred tree which appears so constantly in Assyrian sculpture is apparently a traditional form of the date-palm; but the leaves which terminate its branches are sometimes replaced by cones, either of the pine or cedar, but probably of the former, since one species of *pinus* grows to a great size in the Assyrian highlands, whilst the deodar—which, from its stately growth and from the reverence paid to it in Northern India, where its name signifies the 'tree of the gods,' we are at first inclined to look for—does not extend westward beyond the skirts of the Himalayêh. Similar cones are frequently placed in the hands of Assyrian priests, and it is probably the same fir—at all events, the cones are the same—which is introduced in a solemn procession on the basement of the grand colonnade at Persepolis.

For the choice of two of these trees—the palm and the fig—it is easy to account. Both rank and have always ranked

\* Tennent's *Ceylon*, ii., pp. 613-619.

among the most important food-producers of the East, and it would have been impossible to find more satisfactory types of the mystical tree of life, whose fruit imparted strength and wisdom. Honour,' said the Prophet of Islam, 'your paternal aunt, the date-palm; for she was created in paradise, of the same earth from which Adam was made.' 'Adam,' says a later Mohammedan tradition, 'was permitted to bring with him out of paradise three things—the myrtle, which is the chief of sweet-scented flowers in the world; an ear of wheat, the chief of all kinds of food; and dates, the chief of all the fruits of this world. The dates were mysteriously conveyed to the Hejáz; from them all the date-palms in the world have sprung; and Allah has decreed them all to the true believers, who have conquered all the countries in which they are found.\* With such a legend in proof of the value set on the date-palm, we need hardly suppose it to have been borrowed as a sacred symbol by one country from another, nor trace Egyptian influence in the golden palm-trees of Solomon's temple. Both Jews and Arabs regarded the tree as eminently mysterious, and as possessing several properties that rendered it an emblem of a human being. If the head be cut off, it dies; if a branch, another does not grow in its place. Much was to be learnt moreover concerning things both present and future from certain mysterious movements of its leaves on a windless day; and Abraham, say the Rabbins, was well skilled in this 'language of the palms.'† The palm is now rarely found on the high land of Palestine; but it grows and has always grown in abundance on the great maritime plain, whence, 'at least in recent times, came the branches which distinguished the pilgrims of Palestine from those of Rome, Compostella, and Canterbury, by the name of Palmer.'‡ Its

\* *Es-Suyootee*, quoted by Lane. † Celsius, *Hierobotanicon*, ii. 449.

‡ Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 145.



very rarity, however, in the hill-country, must have given a value and interest to the palm, wherever it was found there. It is one of the scriptural types of a righteous man ; and it has been suggested that there is a reference to the palm—which was popularly believed to put forth a shoot every month, and hence to become, at the close of the year, a symbol of it—in St. John's description of the Tree of Life in the midst of the Heavenly Jerusalem, 'which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month.' \* Such an allusion, indeed, appears to have been recognised at a very early period, and the Tree of Life is represented by a date-palm on some of the earliest mosaics which line the apses of Roman basilicas. It thus appears in the church of SS. Cosmas and Damian (*circa* A.D. 526), with the phoenix, a most ancient type of our Lord, on its summit. In the famous mosaic in the oratory adjoining S. Giovanni Laterano (*circa* 642), the palm, with the Almighty Father and the Son on either side of it, rises from the centre of an enclosure, guarded by an angel with a drawn sword. Thus the palm-branch of the Christian martyr was not only an emblem of victory adopted from the well-known heathen use of it, but typified still more strikingly his connection with the Tree of Divine Life, 'whose leaves were for the healing of the nations.' †

\* Rev. xxii. 2.

† Among the Indians of the Orinooko, the Moriche palm (*Mauritia flexuosa*) is held sacred ; and the Christian missionaries named it the 'Tree of Life.' The Tamanacs say that a man and woman, the sole survivors of a great deluge, cast behind them over their heads the fruits of the Moriche palm, and saw the seeds in it produce men and women who repeopled the earth. (Kingsley's 'At Last,' i. p. 304). Canon Kingsley suggests (ii. 271) that the banana, a cousin of the palm, may have been a sacred tree in geological periods of unknown antiquity. 'It is wild nowhere now on earth. It stands alone and unique in the vegetable kingdom, with distant cousins, but no brother kinds. It has been cultivated so long that though it flowers and fruits, it seldom or never seeds, and is propagated entirely by cuttings. . . The only spots in which it seeds regularly are the Andaman Islands,

It is not until after the first Crusade that the palm-leaf, then brought home in abundance, appears in the churches of Northern Europe under a form which enables us to recognise it with anything like certainty among the sculptured foliage enwreathing their capitals. There is reason to believe, however, that the date-palm, under one of its most ancient mystical forms, does appear in many French churches of a much earlier period ; and that the sacred tree which figured so constantly on the walls of the vast palaces of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon, is to be recognised, slightly, if at all, changed, among the decorations of churches whose builders little suspected the meaning and the antiquity of the emblem they were adopting. The probable history of its introduction is sufficiently curious. During the early Merovingian period an extensive commercial intercourse was kept up between Gaul and the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. Syrian merchants established themselves in Gaul ; and, judging from the manner in which they are mentioned by Gregory of Tours, must, with their followers, have ranked among the most remarkable of the strangely-mixed races which then met and jostled in the streets of the larger Gallic cities. One of these merchants, at least, was a man of sufficient wealth and importance to purchase for himself the bishopric of Paris.\*

in the Bay of Bengal. . . . Are the Andaman Islands its original home ? or rather, was its original home that great southern continent of which the Andamans are perhaps a remnant ? Does not this fact, as well as the broader fact that different varieties of the plantain and the banana girdle the earth round at the Tropics, and have girdled it as long as records go back, hint at a time when there was a Tropic continent or archipelago round the whole equator, and at a civilization and a horticulture compared to which those of old Egypt are upstarts of yesterday ?'

\* Greg. Turon. *H. Eccles.* ix. 26. On the death of Ragnemodus, Bishop of Paris, 'Eusebius, quidam negotiator, genere Syrus, datis multis muneribus, in locum ejus subrogatus est. Isque, accepto episcopatu, omnem scholam decessoris sui abjiciens, Syros de genere suo ecclesiasticæ domui ministros statuit.' See also L. vi., ch. 6 ; and L. vii., chs. 29 and 31.

All of them were Christians ; and, among other merchandise, they imported from the East the relics of saints, eagerly sought after by the newly-converted Franks and Burgundians ; wine from Gaza and Ascalon, to be used for the holy Eucharist ; roots, such as were eaten by the solitaries of the Egyptian deserts,—which formed the only food of certain ‘inclusi’ (true recluses walled up in lonely towers), whose story is told by Gregory,—and which were also sought after by some of the severer monks ; and the rich silken tissues of the East, to be shaped into cope or chasuble for the service of the altar. Some of these vestments are still preserved in the sacristies of churches, mainly in the South of France. Their origin is at once evident ; and on more than one of them—such is the unchanging spirit of the East—the emblems which figure so largely in Assyrian palaces, and which are seen also on the robes of personages represented on their walls, are reproduced with but slender variation. Among them occurs the sacred tree, with its conventional leaves and flowers. These tissues, it is probable, were woven in the looms of Baghdad or Bussora, where the ancient typical forms may have been longer preserved than elsewhere.\* Their singularity, and their beauty, as set forth by the gold and rich colours of the brocade, seem to have greatly struck the Roman and Franco-Roman artists of Gaul. They copied them in the sculpture of their churches ; and according to some of the most eminent French antiquaries, it is the mystical tree of Assyria between its guardian lions which is represented on the tympana of many church portals of various dates, but all of early character.†

\* ‘The Zoroastrian Homa or Sacred Tree was preserved by the Persians, almost as represented on the Assyrian monuments, until the Arab invasion.’—Layard, *Nineveh*, ii. 472.

† For some remarks on this subject, see the ‘Bulletin Monumental,’ edited by M. de Caumont, vol. 18, pp. 489-494. Some illustrations are there given, including tympana from the churches of Marigny and of Colleville, both in the Department of Calvados.

The form of the tree varies; and the lions are sometimes replaced by dragons or winged monsters. But there is always sufficient resemblance to trace the general design; and it is not perhaps impossible that some of the grotesque carvings on churches built in England during the early Norman period may have had a similar origin. The subject is at least a curious one, and deserves a careful examination at the hands of archæologists.

The third of these most ancient sacred trees—the pine or cedar—is of a different type, and represents a distinct class of ideas. The lightest and most graceful of the fir tribe have a certain character of strength and endurance; and the pines which cover the highlands of Upper Assyria and of Persia, though they nowhere attain to the gigantic dimensions of the Himalayan deodars, must have contrasted strongly with the date-palms and tamarisks that form the principal growth of the alluvial district. The whole tribe, in effect, possesses something of the character which attains its highest development in those venerable cedars of Lebanon, which are perhaps the most solemnly impressive trees in the world. The forms of these giants—now about twelve in number—are, says Dean Stanley,—

‘Such as must always have impressed the imagination of those who saw them. Their massive trunks, clothed with a scaly texture, almost like the skin of living animals, and contorted with all the multiform irregularities of age, may well have suggested those ideas of regal, almost divine strength and solidity which the Sacred writers ascribe to them. They stand at the apex, so to say, of the vegetable world. “From the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon” downward, extends the knowledge of Solomon. “To the cedars of Lebanon” upwards, reaches the destruction of the trees from the burning bramble of Jotham. The intermarriage of the inferior plants with the cedar is the most inconceivable of all presumption. The shivering of their rock-like stems by the thunderbolt is like the shaking of the solid mountain itself.’ \*

The leaves of the date-palm were represented in Europe

\* *Sermons in the East*, p. 216.

by the light 'catkins' of the willow, still frequently called 'palms,' as in the monastic verse—

'Albescit palmæ coma ; ramus ejus osanna  
Audit, Christicola vociferante viro ;'

but this was a substitution of mediæval times, when some representative of the Eastern tree was required for the churchyard processions of Palm Sunday ; and the golden willow buds offered themselves at precisely the right season. It is possible that the cedar had its Western representative at a much earlier period. Many of its characteristics—its dignity, especially, and its strength—are, among the trees of Europe, most conspicuous in the oak. It is true, indeed, that at a very remote period—so remote that it can only be approximately measured by the geological changes of the post-tertiary æra—much of the soil of this continent was covered with forests composed exclusively of fir-trees, which were replaced, first by a vegetation of oaks, and afterwards by one of beech-trees. The occurrence of such a series of changes in Denmark has been proved by Sir Charles Lyell, in his volume on the 'Antiquity of Man,' and is remarkably borne out by certain changes of signification in the most ancient Aryan names for the fir and the oak.\* The pine

\* It is certain that human inhabitants existed in these early fir-woods, which were synchronous with a portion of the 'age of stone.' That they were of Aryan descent is not so clear ; though no other hypothesis accounts so satisfactorily for the fact that the same word was used by different Aryan races to signify both fir and oak. *Fir*, the Anglo-Saxon *furh*, is identical with the Latin *quercus* ; just as *five*, A.-S. *fif*, is *quinque*,—the changes being in accordance with Grimm's Law. *Foraha*, old H. German, and *Föhre*, modern German, both signify fir=*pinus sylvestris*. But the Lombard form of the same word, *fercha*, is mentioned in the Laws of Rothar as a name of the oak—(roborem aut quercum quod est *fercha*). These facts have been pointed out by Professor Max Müller, who suggests that certain Aryan tribes, all speaking dialects of one and the same language, came to settle in Europe during the fir period,—when they would have known this tree only,—and afterwards witnessed the change to the oak period, giving

forests of that primæval period may well have been solemn and gigantic, worthy fosterers of the religion and the imagination that were bursting into life beneath their roof of shade. But if they were the earliest Western representatives of the king of trees, the attributes which were first assigned to them passed afterwards to the oak, and finally rested there. It is the oak which, like the cedar in the East, is the representative of supernatural strength and power. ‘*Quercus Jovi placuit.*’ Everywhere the oak—which, like the cedar, attracts the lightning, and is frequently splintered by it—is the tree of the Thunder-God. The oaks of Zeus belted his oracle at Dodona. In the North the oak was under the special protection of Thunor or Thor, the hammer-wielding God, whose name is still retained in the word ‘thunder.’ With the exception, perhaps, of the ash, there is no European tree which can at all compete with the oak either in the extent of veneration which has been assigned to it, or in the dignity of its ancient traditions. Between the oak and the ash, indeed,—both ‘patricians’ of the greenwood,—a species of rivalry for the pre-eminence has been maintained from a very early period to the present, when, if more serious omens are no longer afforded by them, it is still possible, say the learned in weather signs, to predict much from the tree which first unfolds her leaves :—

‘ If the oak’s before the ash,  
Then you may expect a splash ;  
But if the ash is ‘fore the oak,  
Then you must beware a soak.’

The oak, however, may fairly claim precedence here, not only as having been the great tree of Britain in her early

the name to the latter tree which they had at first used for the fir. Professor Müller supplies many analogies, especially from the names of metals ; and admitting that many objections may be urged against his hypothesis, he claims for it an impartial examination.—*Lectures on the Science of Language*, 2nd Series : Appendix to Lect. V.

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days, but as affording in its own old age a more venerable image of antiquity than any one of its forest brethren. There is, perhaps, nothing in the world—not even the ‘worm-eaten’ castle hold under whose walls it may stand—that more completely carries back the mind to long past ages than such an oak tree; gnarled, shattered, and storm-beaten, the sward about its roots strewn with hoary fragments brought down by strong winds and wintry snows, yet still wearing its crown of green leaves, and still, year after year, dropping acorns among the fern at its feet. Such are the grand old oaks of Hamilton,—

‘Whose limbs a thousand years have worn,’

relics of the forest under the shade of whose melancholy boughs, says the tradition, Merlin dwelt and prophesied. Wandering at dusk among the low, tower-like trunks of these trees, that are scattered irregularly over a space of level ground, surrounded on all sides by the deeper wood, from which the white oxen occasionally emerge into the twilight, it is the present, far more than the past, that becomes dim and spectral; and if ancient Merlin, with his grey beard and his enchanter’s staff, were on such an occasion to present himself, we should scarcely feel more than the very gentlest ‘shock of mild surprise.’ Still more suggestive than the oaks of Hamilton—though no doubt owing to their very peculiar character, and to their far wilder situation—are those of Wistman’s Wood, on Dartmoor, where, according to a saying of the moormen, you may see ‘a thousand oaks a thousand feet high.’ The marvel is explained by the size of the trees, which, it is said, do not average more than a single foot in height. But the wood is singular enough without this exaggeration. It hangs on the side of a steep hill above the valley of the West Dart, covered, like most of the Dartmoor hill-sides, with a wild ruin of granite blocks and fragments,



between which the trees have found their scanty nourishment. It is partly owing to this want of soil, and still more, perhaps, to the mountainous character of the district, that not one of the trees exceeds the height of a tall man. Yet all display the most striking indications of very great age. Their limbs, knotted and contorted into the most fantastic shapes, spread themselves above and between the blocks of granite, many of which rise higher than the trees. The boughs are thickly clothed with dark green and grey mosses, that hang in long beard-like tangles, and add not a little to the weird look of the strange old wood, which it is difficult to visit, even at mid-day, without a certain 'eerie' feeling. Its real age is unknown, but it is mentioned in some early documents relating to Dartmoor and more than eight hundred concentric rings have been counted in a section from the trunk of one of the larger trees. Wistman's Wood has no traditions of Merlin; but its name takes us back to a personage yet more mysterious—Woden, the 'Lord of the Waste and the Mountain.' 'Wise,' or 'wish,' was, according to Mr. Kemble, one of the many titles of the great Teutonic deity, and the name is retained in the Devonshire term 'whishtness,' which is used to signify all unearthly creatures and their doings. The spectral pack which hunts over Dartmoor is called the 'wish-hounds,' and the black 'master' who follows the chase is, no doubt, the same who has left his mark on Wistman's Wood.

We are here not carried beyond the traditions of our English ancestors; but there is no reason why the oaks of Dartmoor should not—some, perhaps, even of those which now exist—have been venerated in earlier days, when the Britons, who have left their traces on almost every hill-side, were undisputed masters of the district. One of the very few certainties about the Druids is their reverence for the oak, and for the mistletoe which grew on it; and a more remarkable group of



their sacred trees than they may have found at Wistman's Wood can hardly be imagined. The mistletoe, it is true, no longer grows on them ; but it is not in Devonshire only that the mistletoe has deserted the oak. It is now found so rarely on that tree as to have led to the suggestion that we must look for the true mistletoe of the Druids, not in the *Viscum album* of our own woods and orchards, but in the *Loranthus Europæus*, an allied parasite, which is frequently found growing on oaks in the South of Europe. The sprays of the *Loranthus* are longer and its leaves wider than those of our own species, and it is therefore more conspicuous. But although we may allow that the golden bough—

‘Aureus et foliis et lento vimine ramus  
Junoni infernæ dictus sacer . . . . .’

the ‘venerabile donum’ which admitted Æneas to the wonders of the under-world, may have been a tuft of *Loranthus*, the ‘Marentakken’ or ‘branch of spectres,’ which still in Holstein is believed to confer the powers of ghost-seeing on its possessor, is unquestionably the true *Viscum*—the same which hangs in such thick clusters, and so appropriately, in all the orchards about Glastonbury—that famous Isle of Avalon, which was very possibly a stronghold of Druidism, and which, according to the ancient tradition, contained the tomb of the great British hero King Arthur. There is no proof that the *Loranthus* ever grew farther north than at present ; and, on the other hand, the mistletoe figures in the traditions of the Northern nations as well as in those of the Celts. It was a branch of mistletoe which killed Baldur, the ‘whitest’ and best of the gods, after Frigga had taken an oath of all created things that they would never hurt him ; except ‘one little shoot that groweth east of Valhall, so small and feeble, that she forgot to take its oath.’ But the mistletoe, thus forgotten, was put by Loke the destroyer into the hand of the blind Hodr, who flung it at Baldur when all the gods were amusing

themselves by pelting him with the various creatures which had sworn to Frigga ; and Baldur fell dead, pierced by the ' feeble ' branch. More than one sword of a Northern champion was named ' Mistilteinn,' after the weapon which had slain the white god. The story affords one of many points of resemblance between the mythology of Northern Europe and those of Persia and the farther East. In the Shah Namêh the hero Asfendiar is represented as invulnerable except by a branch from a tree growing on the remotest shore of the ocean. Desthân, his enemy, found it, hardened it with fire, and killed the hero. Both legends possibly refer to the ' death ' of the sun—' perishing in his youthful vigour either at the end of a day, struck by the powers of darkness, or at the end of the sunny season, stung by the thorn of winter.'\*

It seems something like a caprice which has excluded the mistletoe as well from the evergreen decorations of our churches at present, as from their ancient sculpture and carvings. We know one instance only of its occurrence. Sprays of mistletoe, with leaf and berry, fill the spandrels of one of the very remarkable tombs in Bristol Cathedral, which were probably designed by some artist-monk in the household of the Berkeleys, whose castle and broad lands are among the chief glories of the West Country, in which the mistletoe is now for the most part found. We do not remember to have seen it elsewhere, even lurking among the quaint devices of a ' Miserere ' ; whilst the oak—every portion of which, in the days of Celtic heathenism, was almost as sacred as the mistletoe which grew on it—was one of the principal trees ' studied ' by mediæval sculptors, when, during the so-called ' Decorated ' period, they reproduced leaf and flower with such exquisite beauty and fidelity ; witness the oak-leaves laid into the panels of the Cantelupe shrine at

\* Max Müller ; ' Comparative Mythology,' in *Oxford Essays* for 1856.

Hereford, or the twisted sprays of oak, clustered with acorns, which form one of the most graceful corbels in the choir of Exeter Cathedral. Nor was the reverence with which the oak was regarded by any means confined to the Celts. The tree, as we have seen, was dedicated in an especial manner to Thor. St. Boniface, who, in his native Devonshire, must have been well acquainted with the heathen superstitions that were still in force about the sacred trees and well-springs, waged a sharp war against them during his wanderings in Central Germany. There was a 'Thor's oak' of enormous size in the country of the Hessians, greatly revered by the people, and which, by the advice of some of the Christian converts, St. Boniface determined to cut down. Accordingly, '*mentis constantiâ comfortatus*,' he began to hew at the gigantic trunk, whilst the 'heathen folk' stood round about, prodigal of their curses, but not daring to interfere. The tree had not been half cut through, when, says Willibald, the biographer of Boniface, who was himself present, a supernatural wind shook the great crown of its branches, and it fell with a mighty crash, divided '*quasi superni nutus solatio*' into four equal parts. The heathens, he continues, recognised the miracle, and most of them were converted on the spot. With the wood of the fallen tree St. Boniface built an oratory, which he dedicated in honour of St. Peter.\*

The destruction of the great Thor's oak was by no means an unwise step. The numerous decrees and canons set forth in various councils, and mentioned in different penitentials, as late as the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, against such as practised witchcraft and did heathen ceremonies under great trees and in forests, prove how difficult it was to separate the ancient creed from such living memorials of it. Nor does the case seem to have been greatly improved when, as frequently occurred among the Celts, especially in Ireland and Armorica,

\* Life by Willibald, ch. 6.

the tree was re-appropriated by the great saint of the district. The Irish St. Colman presided over a famous oak-tree, any fragment of which, kept in the mouth, effectually warded off death by hanging—an immunity not to be despised in the land of shillelaghs. When St. Columba's oak at Kenmare was blown down in a storm, no one dared to touch it, or to apply its wood to ordinary purposes, except a certain tanner, who cured his leather with the bark. With the leather he made himself a pair of shoes ; but the first time he put them on he was struck with leprosy, and remained a leper all his life.\* The trees of saints might nowhere be profaned with impunity. In the cloister at Vreton, in Brittany, was a yew-tree which had sprung from the staff of St. Martin—not the great saint of Tours, but the first abbot of the Armorican monastery. Under its shadow the Breton princes always prayed before entering the church. No one dared to touch a leaf, and even the birds treated the sweet, scarlet berries with respect. Not so a band of Norman pirates, two of whom climbed St. Martin's tree to cut bow-staves from it. Both, of course, fell, and were killed on the spot.†

It is possible that many of the more famous oak-trees yet standing in England, may date from the days of, at least, Saxon heathendom, and, like trees of the Irish saints, may have been reappropriated after the conversion of our ancestors. About some of them ancient superstitions yet linger, and nearly all are boundary-trees, marking the original limit of shire or of manor. Such was the great 'Shire-oak' which stood at the meeting-place of York, Nottingham, and Derby, into which three counties it extended its vast shadow. It might not compete with the chestnut of 'Cento Cavalli' on Mount Etna ; but the branches of

\* Magnus O'Donnell, *Life of St. Columba*, ap. Colgan, *A. S. Hibern.* ii.

† Vita S. Martini, ap. Mabillon, *Acta S.S. ord. Bened.* i. p. 371.

the Shire-oak could afford shelter to 230 horsemen. Such, too, is the 'Crouch' oak at Addlestone, in Surrey, under which Wickliffe preached and Queen Elizabeth dined—one of the ancient border-marks of Windsor Forest, whose name, according to Kemble, refers to the figure of the cross anciently cut upon it. Trees thus marked are constantly referred to as boundaries in Anglo-Saxon charters. The cross withdrew the oak from the dominion of Thor or Odin, and not only afforded help and protection to human beings, but even to some tribes of the elfin world. Such, at least, was the belief in the old land of the Teutons. As a peasant named Hans Krepel was one day at work on a heath near Salzburg, a 'little wild or moss-wifekin' appeared to him at noontide, and begged that when he left his labour he would cut three crosses on the last tree he felled. He forgot to do so. The next day she appeared again, saying, 'Ah, my man, why did you not cut the three crosses yesterday? it would have been of use to me and to you. In the evening, and at night, we are often hunted by the wild huntsmen, and are obliged to allow them to worry us, unless we can reach a tree with a cross on it. From thence they have no power to move us.' The man answered churlishly, 'Of what use can that be? how can the crosses help you? I shall do no such thing to please you, indeed.' Upon this, the 'wifekin' flew upon him, and squeezed him so hard that he became ill after it; 'though,' says Prætorius, who tells the story, 'he was a stout fellow.\*' In England it was thought that the oaks themselves were mysteriously protected. According to a belief fully maintained by the 'gossiping' Aubrey, and half endorsed by Evelyn in his 'Sylva'—

'A strange noise proceeds from a falling oak, so loud as to be heard

\* Prætorius, *Anthropodemus Plutonicus*, Magdeburg, 1666: quoted in Price's Preface to Warton, p. 38. See also Grimm, *D. Mythol.*, p. 881.

at half a mile distant, as if it were the genius of the oak lamenting.' . . . . . 'It has not been unusually observed,' he continues, 'that to cut oakwood is unfortunate. There was at Norwood one oak that had mistletoe, a timber tree, which was felled about 1657. Some persons cut this mistletoe for some apothecaries in London, and sold them a quantity for ten shillings each time, and left only one branch remaining for more to sprout out. One fell lame shortly after ; soon after, each of the others lost an eye ; and he that felled the tree, though warned of these misfortunes of the other men, would, notwithstanding, adventure to do it, and shortly after broke his leg ; as if the Hamadryades had resolved to take an ample revenge for the injury done to their sacred and venerable oak. I cannot omit here taking notice of the great misfortunes in the family of the Earl of Winchelsea, who, at Eastwell, in Kent, felled down a most curious grove of oaks, near his own noble seat, and gave the first blow with his own hands. Shortly after, his Countess died in her bed suddenly ; and his eldest son, the Lord Maidstone, was killed at sea by a cannon-bullet.\*

Various omens were afforded by the oak ; the change of its leaves from their usual colour gave more than once, says Evelyn, 'fatal premonition of coming misfortunes during the great civil war.' It was the 'suiacheantas' or 'badge' of the Stewarts, and the Highlanders looked upon its not being an evergreen as an omen of the fate of the Royal house. Yet the oak was a thorough-bred Cavalier, as befitted the king of the forest—

'Wherein the younger Charles abode  
Till all the paths were dim,  
And far below the Roundhead rode,  
And hummed a surly hymn.'

No oak-cutter's misfortunes will, it is to be hoped, fall upon us, because the 29th of May now celebrates with such curtailed ceremony that 'sacred oak,' which, says Evelyn, in the dedication of his 'Sylva' to King Charles, 'you, our Θεός ἰλιαεὸς—Nemorensis Rex—once consecrated with your presence, making it your temple and court too.'

Thus the stroke of St. Boniface's axe, although it overthrew Thor and sent the parting genius with sighing from his

\* Aubrey's *History of Surrey*.

tree, could not altogether destroy the recollections and superstitions of the ancient creed. Still less have they faded from the other great sacred tree of Northern Europe, the ash. As with the oak, there are traces of an ancient reverence for the ash among Celts as well as Teutons. But the tree is more especially the property of the Scandinavian races. With them the great ash-tree, Yggdrasil, represented the universe. It was the tree of the world, which rose, evergreen and all glittering with dew, above the hall of the triple Norns—Urdr, Verdandr, and Skuldr—the past, present, and future. Under its three roots were the cold land of Hela, the place of torture; the land of the Hrim-thyrs, or frost giants; and middle earth, the land of mortal men. An eagle, ‘far-seeing and much kenning,’ with a hawk perched between his eyes, sits on the top of the tree; and Ratatosk, the squirrel, runs up and down the branches, carrying the words of the eagle to Nidhoegg, the worm of the abyss, who lies coiled at the foot. The Norns daily pour water over the tree from their mysterious well, and under its shadow the gods sit ‘to give dooms.’ It is the ‘noble’ tree—the ‘central,’ the ‘ancient’ tree—highest and best of all trees; yet in spite of all its honours the ash ‘drees a heavier wierd’ than men weet of. Four stags are for ever biting at its highest shoots. In its side it is decaying, and more serpents than it is possible to number spread venom through the fibres of its roots. Under it is hidden the horn Giollr, with which Heimdallr, the warder of the gods, shall rouse the world at the last great conflict. At its sound

‘Groans the old tree,  
And Loke is loosed;  
Shudders Yggdrasil,  
The great standing ash.’\*

The fire of Surtr will burn the tree at the end; but it will be

\* *Volo-Spa*, str. xliii.

renewed again, fair and green, and the gods will once more congregate under its branches.

Explanations of this piece of Northern mythology have been attempted at great length, and a wonderful amount of learning has been poured out on the subject. The eagle has been thought to represent heaven, or the air, and Ratatosk, the squirrel, the vapours that float perpetually over the surface of the earth.\* But whilst it is sufficiently clear that the tree is a symbol of the universe, its various accompaniments are by no means easy of interpretation. In the whole, the doomed character of the Northern religion—reflecting the sombre skies and the deep gloomy forests under which it was born and nurtured—is strongly apparent. The tree suffers innumerable evils: the whole creation ‘groans together’ until its final renovation, after the ‘twilight of the gods’ and the great fire of Surtr. Yggdrasil (the etymology is so obscure that we will not attempt to explain it) suggests in effect far higher realities than it was meant to symbolise, and we can with difficulty escape the conviction that some of its imagery may have been borrowed from the stores of the remoter East.

It can hardly have been the mere beauty of the ash which induced our Scandinavian forefathers to adopt it as their mysterious world-tree, graceful and striking as it is, standing sentinel on the outskirts of the wood or overhanging some broken river-bank, the dark lines of its curved branches traced here and there between masses of floating leafage. But the range of the ash extends farther north than that of the oak. It is the chief timber-tree of the forests beyond the Baltic, and its wood was used for many purposes for which the pines and firs of the Northern forests were not available. The long spear-shafts and axe-handles of the heroes of the Sagas were

\* Finn Magnussen, *Lexicon Mythol.* s. v. Yggdrasil. See also his ‘Eddalæren.’



made of ash-wood. Their ships also were not unfrequently built of ash ; and it may be either for this reason that Adam of Bremen gives the name of 'ashmen' to the Vikings of Norway and Denmark, or because, as the prose Edda asserts, the three sons of the giant, of whom Odin was the eldest, made the first man from a block of ash-timber which they found on the sea-shore. The ash, too, like the sycamore, to which Sir Walter Scott has somewhere compared the sturdy endurance of the Scottish character, will grow on higher ground than most other trees, and in such situations affords in itself no bad image of a hardy Northern 'ashman.' Its sprays of foliage are thinner and more curved, and its moss-covered trunk is knotted and twisted, as though it had encountered fierce obstacles in its rising, and had put forth all its strength in the struggle. It was partly from this power of battling with 'winter and rough weather,' and partly perhaps from the mysterious feeling with which the old Saxon regarded it, that the ash so often appears as the 'household tree' of outlying thorpes and granges. Many an ancient steading on the borders of the Devonshire moors, or on the high grounds of Hampshire—the strongholds of Saxon tradition—is thus marked by a group of knotted ash-trees.

Some such reasons as these may have led to the adoption of the ash as the great sacred tree of the North. Yet it is not easy to pluck out the heart of its mystery, and the descriptions of certain ancient representatives of Yggdrasil do not lessen the difficulty. The great world-tree under which the gods assembled was, says the Edda, although an ash, an evergreen ; and scattered over Northern Europe were many sacred trees, revered as representing Yggdrasil, which are said to have been green summer and winter. Such a tree, according to the Archbishop of Bremen, stood close to the great temple at Upsal ; and there was a famous tree of the same kind in Dithmarsch, carefully protected by an intrenchment, and

looked upon as bound up in some mysterious way with the fortunes of the country. When Dithmarsch lost her ancient liberty, the tree withered ; but a magpie, one of the chief Northern birds of augury, came and built on it. Her eggs produced five young ones, perfectly white—an omen that liberty should one day return. These trees may have been either solitary specimens of the ilex, or more probably of the Turkey oak (*Q. cerris*), the chief oak of Southern Europe—a tree which holds on its leaves so long, that in the North it might well pass for an evergreen. A still more remarkable tree, described as an evergreen—that at Romowe, the old sacred centre of the Prussians—was certainly an oak.

It is somewhat remarkable, considering that the roots of Yggdrasil were half destroyed by the serpents that lay nestled among them, to find the leaves and wood of the ash regarded throughout Northern Europe as a powerful protection from all manner of snakes and 'evil worms.' Among the curious woodcuts which adorn the Roman edition of Olaus Magnus 'de gentibus septentrionalibus,' that illustrating his chapter 'touching the keeping away of serpents from children in harvest time' represents the children comfortably slung in their cradles from the branches of great ash-trees, whilst their mothers are hard at work in the harvest-field below. Snakes, according to the gossiping old Swede, cannot abide the ash, and will not willingly go near it. If a circle be traced with an ashen staff, says a piece of Devonshire folk-lore, round a sleeping viper, the creature will be unable to pass beyond it. In such folk-lore as this, or in the 'shrew-ash' described in White's Selborne, it may not be possible to trace Yggdrasil ; but Northern antiquaries insist that the world-tree has had, and has, its direct representatives. They find it, first in the maypole, with its garlands, its streaming ribbons, and its birds'-eggs, now almost as completely a relic of past ages as Yggdrasil itself ; and also in the Christmas Tree, which,

according to the learned Finn Magnussen, is descended in a straight line from the great ash, of all whose accompaniments—the stags, the eagle, and the squirrel—the ornaments which hang from the branches of the modern tree are memorials. These are weighty questions : but it is quite certain that the recollections of Yggdrasil did not fade away with the introduction of Christianity ; and that they were interwoven in a remarkable manner with some of the mediæval traditions relating to the tree of the cross. Eilif, a Norwegian scald, who, before his conversion, had been a devoted servant of Thor, thus, after he had become a so-called Christian, speaks of Our Lord :—

‘ They say he sitteth on a mount,  
South at the Urdr well ;  
So the strong King of Rome’s gods (angels)  
Have power without bound.’ \*

The Urdr well was that from which the Norns drew water to pour over Yggdrasil ; and on a mount under the tree Thor and his brethren sat ‘ to give dooms.’ Eilif must have been still more than half a heathen ; but his verses show how readily the imagery of the former creed could be adapted after the change to Christianity ; and some later mediæval poems, quoted in Grimm’s great work on Teutonic Mythology, prove that the connection with Yggdrasil, suggested in Eilif’s verses, was long retained. The tree of the cross, says one of these ‘ singers,’ is a noble tree, planted in a garden. Its roots pierce downward to hell ; its top reaches to heaven ; and on its branches, which spread over the world, sit birds that sing without ceasing.† The world-tree of the Ashmen has here become a world-tree with a far deeper significance. It is not clear, however, whether such descriptions as these (which occur also in

\* Finn Magnussen.

† Grimm, *D. Mythol.*, p. 757.

graver writers\*) were meant to be accepted literally. It is more certain that a remarkable legend, of a different kind, was attached to the actual tree of the cross, and was generally believed throughout the middle ages.

It is unnecessary to discuss in this place the historical truth of the discovery of our Lord's cross by the Empress Helena, said to have been made in the year 326. The great argument against it is the silence of Eusebius, who died about A.D. 338; but it is at least certain that a cross, said to have been that of our Lord, was publicly shown and honoured in Jerusalem during the episcopate of St. Cyril (350-386). It was after this time, and probably as a natural result of the interest awakened by the asserted discovery, that the legend which told the history of the tree of the cross gradually took shape; working into itself many older traditions, especially those which had made Hebron and its neighbourhood the chief resting-place of Adam after his expulsion from Paradise. With slight variations the story occurs in all the great mediæval legendaries, including the '*Legenda Aurea*' of Jaques de Voraigne. It was told also in verse, by trouvère and by troubadour; and formed the subject of many stained windows (it occurs, for example, in one of those which give an especial interest to the Cornish church of St. Neot), and of much ancient tapestry and wall painting. In its complete shape the legend is as follows:—

For four hundred and thirty-two years after his expulsion from Paradise, Adam had tilled the ground in the valley of Hebron, when he felt his end approaching, and determined to send his son Seth to the gates of Paradise, to demand from their keeper, 'the angel called Cherubim,' the oil of mercy

\* '*Nam ipsa crux magnum in se mysterium continet; cujus positio talis est, ut superior pars cœlos petat, inferior terræ inhæreat, fixa infernorum ima contingat, latitudo autem ejus partes mundi appellat.*' From a treatise '*De Divinis Officiis*,' quoted by Grimm, p. 757.

which had been promised to Adam when he was driven from the garden. Seth accordingly set forth, finding his way by the footprints of Adam and Eve, upon which no grass had grown since they passed from Paradise to Hebron. The angel, after hearing the message, ordered Seth to look beyond the gate into the garden, and to tell him what he saw. He beheld a place of inexpressible delight and beauty, with the four great rivers proceeding from a fountain in the centre ; and, rising from the edge of the fountain, an enormous tree, with wide-spreading branches, but without either bark or leaves. He was ordered to look a second time, when he saw a serpent twisted round the tree ; and a third time, when the tree had raised itself to heaven, and bore on its summit a child wrapped in glittering vestments. It was this child, said the angel, who would give to Adam the oil of mercy when the due time should come. Meanwhile the angel gave Seth three seeds from the fruit of the tree of which Adam had eaten. These were to be placed in the mouth of Adam before his burial ; and three trees would spring from them,—a cedar, a cypress, and a pine. The trees were symbolical of the Holy Trinity, not only by their number, but by the virtues which belonged to each separately.

It happened as the angel had foretold. The trees were hardly a foot above the ground in the days of Abraham. Moses, to whom their true nature was revealed, took them up carefully, carried them with him during the years of wandering in the desert, and then replanted them in a mysterious valley named Comfrafort (‘Comfort,’ ‘consolation’?). From Comfrafort, David was directed to bring them to Jerusalem. He planted them close to a fountain ; and within thirty years they had grown together so as to form a single tree of wonderful beauty, under the shade of which David composed his psalms and wept for his sins. In spite of its beauty, Solomon cut it down in order to complete

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his temple ; for which a single beam was wanted, of a size such as no other tree could furnish. But, in fitting the beam to its place, it was found, after repeated trials, either too long or too short ; and the marvel was accepted as a sign that it was not to be so employed. The miraculous beam, however, was reverently preserved in the temple. A certain woman, named Maximilla, one day leant against it, when her clothes caught fire, and she cried out in a spirit of prophecy, 'Jesus Christ, thou Son of God, help me !' The Jews, when they heard her cry, took her for mad, and chased her from the city—the first martyr, says the legend, for Jesus Christ.

Thus far the more usual version. Another, which has been followed in a striking Provençal narration, quoted by M. Fauriel,\* asserts that when the tree was found too short for the temple, it was flung aside into a certain marsh, where it served as a bridge. But when the Queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and was about to cross the marsh, she saw in a vision how the Saviour of the world was to be suspended on that tree, and so would not walk over it, but forthwith adored it. It was afterwards, as all the versions agree, buried in the earth, on the spot where the Pool of Bethesda was at a later time made ; so that it was not only the descent of the angel, but the virtues of the buried wood, which gave its healing qualities to the water. At the time of the Passion the wood rose and floated on the surface. The Jews took it to make the cross of our Lord.

Such is the remarkable legend which has at least the interest of having been very widely spread, and of having been generally received as authentic. It would be no easy task to trace the gradual steps of its formation, or to mark the period of its first introduction to Europe. The footprints of Adam, which left the ground bare, are still pointed out on the summit of Mount Gerizim. There was a very ancient

\* *Hist. de la Poésie Provençale*, i. 263.

tradition—more ancient apparently than the legend which has just been narrated—which asserted that the cross itself was fixed in the grave of Adam, and that his skull was thrown up in digging the ground to receive it—

‘Thou madest Death ; and lo, thy foot  
Is on the skull which thou hast made.’

Traditions such as these seem to have been worked into the later legend ; and there may have been others relating to Adam preserved in the neighbourhood of Hebron. The tree of the legend, ‘without bark or leaves,’ is possibly not unconnected with a remarkable oak, which Sir John Mandeville, in the middle of the fourteenth century, thus describes :—

‘And a lytille fro Ebron is the Mount of Mambre, of the which the valley taketh his name. And there is a tree of Oke, that the Sarazines clepen (call) Dirpe, that is of Abraham’s tyme, the whiche men clepen the drye tree. And thei seye, that it hathe ben there sithe the beginnyng of the world ; and was sumtyme grene, and bare leves, unto the tyme that oure Lord dyede on the cros ; and thanne it dryede ; and so dyden alle the trees that waren thanne in the worlde. And some saye, be here prophecyes, that a Lord, a prince of the west syde of the world, shalle wyn the land of promysseyoun, that ys the Holy Land, with helpe of Cristene men ; and he schalle do synge a masse undir that drye tree, and then the tree schalle wexen grene, and bere bothe fruyt and leves. And through that myracle manye Sarazines and Jewes schulle be turned to Cristene feythe. And therefore thei don gret worschipe thereto, and kepen it fully besyly. And alle be it so, that it be drye, natheles yet he berethe gret vertue : for certeynly he that hath a litille thereof upon him, it heleth him of the fallynge evylle ; and his hors schalle not be a foundred ; and manye othere vertues it hathe : wherefore men holden it full precyous.\*

This is no doubt the ‘antediluvian’ oak—*την Ωγυγην καλου μενην δρυν*—mentioned by Josephus, and especially dedicated to Abraham,† the last relic of the ‘oaks’ (mistranslated

\* *Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, ed. Halliwell, pp. 68, 69. Mandeville left England in 1322, and returning to Europe after an absence of 34 years, died at Liège in 1371.

† See Dean Stanley’s *Lectures on the Jewish Church*, and *Sermons preached in the East*.

the 'plain'\*) of Mamre. The tree was said in later times to have sprung from the staff of one of the angels who visited Abraham here ; and though sometimes blazing with fire, it nevertheless was always green. Writers who, like Lipsius and Gretser, maintained that the cross of our Lord had been made of oak, appealed to the religious sanctity with which the sacred writers seem occasionally to invest that tree—and especially this oak of Mamre—as partly confirming their opinion. But the earlier mediæval belief was evidently connected with the legend of the tree which sprang from the three seeds given to Seth ; and when four kinds of wood are mentioned, the title of the cross is included :—

'Pes crucis est cedrus ; corpus tenet alta cupressus ;  
Palma manus retinet ; titulo lætatur oliva.'

Bede names cypress, cedar, pine, and box as the four woods ; and St. Chrysostom, who names but three, refers to the words of Isaiah, 'The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee ; the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary.'† What the material of our Lord's cross may in truth have been, it is not easy to conjecture ; unless we assign any weight to the assertion of Lipsius, that the pieces which were shown in his day as relics were of oak.‡

The cross of our blessed Lord may be said to fling its shadow over the whole vegetable world. From this time the trees and the flowers which had been associated with heathen

\* Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 103.

† Isaiah lx. 13. Chrysostom, *Orat. de Veneratione Crucis*, quoted by Gretser de Cruce.

‡ 'E quâ materia crux ? et obvio et prompto aliquo ligno. E quâ nostri Servatoris ? Censemus e quercu. Primum quia viri fide digni asserunt frusta sacratissimi hujus ligni quæ hodie extant, speciem hanc referre. Tum, quia crebra et frequens in Judæa olim et nunc quoque illa arbor. Tertio, quia robustum lignum, et fixationi laturæque aptum. . . . . Nam quod superioris aliquot sævi scriptores tria aut quatuor genera ligni in cruce dominica agnoscunt, curiose magis dictum arbitramur quam vere.'—*Justus Lipsius de Cruce*, l. iii. cap. 13.



rites and deities, began to be connected with holier names, and not unfrequently with the events of the Crucifixion itself. Thus one species of orchis, which in Cheshire is called 'Gethsemane,' is said to have been growing at the foot of the cross, and to have received some drops of blood on its leaves. Hence the dark stains by which they have ever since been marked ; just as 'Jean le gorge-rouge,' as the robin is called in Brittany, is there said to have plucked a thorn from the crown of the Saviour, in the vain attempt to remove it, and to have been marked ever since by its red breast. Some such legend seems also to have been attached to the white, purple-stained flower of the wood-sorrel, which the early Italian painters, Fra Angelico among them, occasionally place in the foreground of their Crucifixions. The triple leaf of this plant—which St. Patrick is said to have used, as he did the shamrock, in illustration of the Trinity—and, as Mr. Ruskin suggests, its peculiar power of quenching thirst, may also have been in the mind of the painters, and the remarkable Italian name of the wood-sorrel—'Alleluia'—may have had its share in its introduction ; 'as if the very flowers round the cross were giving glory to God.' There is, however, one plant which was anciently regarded, at least in Northern Europe, as having been more especially connected with the sufferings of our Lord—the aubépine or whitethorn. It is of this that the crown of thorns was generally thought to have been made. We now know that it cannot have been so ; but the recollection of the old belief may well give an additional interest to those venerable thorns which are so often found—planted, it may have been, with this especial reference near the ruins of monastic houses.

The whitethorn is one of the trees most in favour with the small people ; and both in Brittany and in some parts of Ireland it is held unsafe to gather even a leaf from certain old and solitary thorns, which grow in sheltered hollows of the

moorland, and are the fairies' trysting places. But no 'evil ghost' dares to approach the whitethorn, such are the virtues which it acquired from the use which had been made of it. We may turn once more to Sir John Mandeville for the mediæval belief :—

'Then was our Lord ylad into a gardyn . . . and there the Jewes scorned hym, and maden hym a croune of the braunches of Albespyne, that is white thorn, that grew in the same gardyn, and setten yt on hys heved. . . . And therefore hath the white thorn many vertues. For he that beareth a braunch on him thereof, no thondre, ne no maner of tempest may dere (hurt) hym; ne in the hows that yt is ynne may non evil ghost entre. . . . Afterward was our Lord lad forth before the Bischoppes and the maysters of the lawe, to another gardyn of Anne (Annas) . . . and there also he was examined and scorned . . . and crowned eft with a white thorn that men clepeth barbarynes, that grew in that gardyn; and that hath also many vertues. And afterwards he was lad into a gardyn of Cayphas, and there he was crowned with eglantier. . . . And after he was lad into the chambre of Pylate, and there he was crowned . . . and there made thei the crown of Jonkes (rushes) of the see . . . and of this crown half ys in Paris and the other half at Costantynoble: and this crown had Christ on hys heved when he was don upon the cros; and therefore ought men to worschipe it and hold it more worthi than any of the other.\*

The various beliefs respecting the crown of thorns are here curiously combined. That it had been made of whitethorn was the natural creed of Northern Europe; and it was the scent of 'aubépine' that filled the air when, according to the romance, the holy crown blossomed afresh, whilst the victorious Charles the Great was kneeling before it. The berberis is the 'holy thorn' of Italy, where it seems to have been so regarded because its thorns are set together in groups of three at each joint of the branch. The prickly rush was one of the Eastern traditions, but the belief of the East has been tolerably constant to what was possibly the real plant used—(although this can only be asserted with much hesitation)—the Nabk (*Zizyphus spina Christi*), a species of buckthorn.

\* *Travels*, p. 70.

This plant is still found in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and is identical with the 'atad' of Scripture, translated 'bramble' in the English version. Since the bramble has been thus consecrated, says Gretser, it has, in truth, obtained the kingdom among trees, and the rest 'put their trust in its shadow,' as foretold in the parable of Jotham.\* The nabk has large heart-shaped green leaves, and bears a single-stoned fruit, which 'looks and tastes rather like a bad crab-apple.' It is, according to Sir Gardner Wilkinson,† the lotos of Homer, the enchanted fruit of the land

'In which it seemèd always afternoon.'

A sort of wine was made from it by the lotos-eaters—the origin, it has been suggested, of the Homeric myth.

The legend frequently assigned to the aspen—that it was used for the cross of our Lord, and that its leaves have shivered ever since, is probably of no great antiquity, and is rather local than general. The shivering of the leaves is said, in some parts of Germany, to have been a punishment for the great pride of the tree, which refused to bow its head when the Saviour passed through the forests of the North, and all the other trees bent lowly before Him. The story, which is found elsewhere, recalls the miraculous palm of the Gospel of the Infancy, which bent its crown of fruit for the support of the Virgin, who was resting beneath it, and was rewarded by the Divine Infant with the words, 'Lift thee up, O palm, and be thou companion of the trees which are in the paradise of my Father.' Still less general than the legend of the aspen is the belief—which seems, indeed, almost confined to certain of the midland counties—that the cross was made of elder, and that for this reason the wood of the elder-tree should never be bound up in faggots for burning, or be treated with the least disrespect. This is the more remarkable, because the usual mediæval tradition ascribed a

\* Judges ix.

† Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, ii. 127.

very different character to the elder-tree, which had been of evil repute ever since Judas hanged himself upon it. The tree on which Judas died, which Mandeville calls a 'tre of eldre,' proving at least thereby the general belief of Western Europe, was shown in his time 'fast by' the tomb of Absalom. It is probable that the piece of English folk-lore has its roots in the old heathenism of the North, and is not unconnected with a curious superstition about the elder still general in Denmark. On the border of the wood, with its white clusters glimmering through the dusk, the elder has an especially ghostlike and mysterious appearance; and it is held in Denmark that the tree is protected by a powerful being called the Elder-mother, without whose leave it is not safe to gather the flowers. No household furniture must be made of elder-wood,—least of all a cradle; for in such a case the Elder-mother will certainly strangle the sleeping child. It has been suggested that a connexion may exist between the Danish name of the elder-tree (*hylde*), and that of the elves (*ellen*). This is uncertain: but Mr. Worsaae would, perhaps, be justified in pointing to the English belief as the Christianized form of a superstition introduced by the first Scandinavian settlers within the Danelagh.

The change, of which this may be an example, and to which reference has more than once been made, is illustrated by nothing so completely as by the flowers which have been more especially dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. All flowers, indeed, are said to be dedicated to her; hence the varied groups which fill Continental churches during her month—the month of May, and hence the wreaths of all kinds and colours with which the Flemish painters delighted to encircle their pictures of the Mother and Child. But there are many with which 'Our Lady's' name is, in one form or another, directly connected. To her belong the 'Lady's grass,' the 'Lady's slipper,' and 'Lady's smock.' The grey-green leaf, covered

with a soft, silky hair, of the *Alchemilla vulgaris*, is our 'Lady's mantle,' the glistening drops that sparkle on the sundew are our 'Lady's tears,' and the beautiful 'Maiden' hair fern, that lines the sides of Cornish sea caves with its delicate fronds, is also commemorative of her, and is in some parts of Europe known as 'Maria's hair.' To us these plants now suggest the Virgin only; but long before the first Christian teachers made their way to the shores of Northern Europe, they had been connected with some great female divinity, whose name is still here and there retained. Thus, one species of *Adiantum* is still known in Iceland as 'Freyja's hair'; and it is for the most part Freyja, the 'frau'—mother and queen of the Northern gods—who in these and similar cases was replaced by the Virgin. The lady-bird, the German 'Marienvoglein,' was once 'Freyja's bird'; and the constellation of Orion's belt, in Zealand known as 'Mariärok,'—Mary's spindle,—is still Freyja's spindle in Sweden. Although it is not always easy to account for the attributes of mystery or of magical power assigned to the sacred plants of the ancient world, Freyja's plants are generally marked so distinctly by colour or by peculiar form, as to point out at once the cause of their selection. In some cases the purity of the white flower rendered the change to the patronage of the Virgin specially appropriate: but she seems to have taken the place of the heathen goddess as a matter of course, just as Thor and Odin were replaced in a similar manner by St. John or St. Christopher. The two flowers, however, which beyond all others are connected with the Virgin—the rival queens of the garden, the lily and the rose—had been dedicated to her in the East, whilst Freyja was still presiding undisturbed over her own woods and moorlands; although the same change may be traced in the history and appropriation of both flowers after the Northern world became Christian.

The lily is first directly connected with the Virgin in the story of her Assumption,—a story which was not generally accepted until the beginning of the fifth century, although it dates apparently from the second. This asserts that when the Apostles, on the third day after her interment, visited the grave in which they had laid the mother of our Lord, they found it open, and filled with a growth of roses and white lilies. Henceforth these flowers became her especial emblems, in accordance with the text, ‘I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley.’ The flower which generally appears in connexion with the Virgin is the great white lily (*Lilium candidum*) of our gardens, the purest and most beautiful of all the species. Singularly enough, the native country of this lily is still a matter of dispute. It is nowhere found wild in Palestine, and it has even been suggested that it may have been an importation from the New World. This, however, as Dr. Lindley some time since pointed out, is certainly not the case; since the true white lily appears in many Italian and Flemish pictures of earlier date than the first voyages of Columbus. It is now cultivated in both Syria and Egypt as an exotic bulb; but it seems probable that it has been known in those countries from a very early period, and that the beauty and purity of its flowers caused it to be regarded with a peculiar reverence long before the Christian æra. It seems to be this lily which was believed by the Jews to counteract all witchcraft and enchantments; for which reason Judith is said to have crowned herself with a wreath of lilies when she set out for the tent of Holofernes. It was perhaps introduced into Europe during the Roman period; for it can hardly be any other than the great white lily to which Bede refers as a fit emblem of the resurrection of the Virgin: the pure white petals signifying her spotless body; the golden anthers within typifying her soul, sparkling with Divine light. In pictures of the Annunciation, the branch of white lilies is not placed in

the hand of the archangel Gabriel until the later period of Italian art. The earlier painters represent him with either a sceptre, or, more rarely, with a spray of the olive-tree. But in almost every case the vase of lilies is placed by the side of the Virgin, with its three mystical flowers crowning their three green stems. The origin of this mysterious number was, according to the legend, as follows:—There was a certain famous Master\* of the Dominicans, who for many years had been tormented by doubts concerning the mother of our Lord; and at last, knowing that a brother of his order, named Egidius, was of great renown for sanctity and for divine illumination, he determined to lay his difficulty before him. Brother Egidius, foreknowing both his coming and the object of it, set out to meet the Master, and as he approached, striking the ground with his staff, he exclaimed, ‘O Master of the Preachers! *Virgo ante partum!*’ and immediately, on the spot which he had stricken, there sprang out of the earth a single lily flower, whiter than snow. Again Brother Egidius struck with his staff, saying, ‘O doubting Master! *Virgo in partu!*’ and a second lily appeared; and again he struck, with the words, ‘O my brother! *Virgo post partum!*’ and a third lily sprang up to illustrate the miracle and to confirm the faith of the Master.\* The story is appropriately assigned to the Dominicans, who in their origin were so closely connected with the great burst of devotion to the Virgin Mary which characterised the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries. It is to this period that most of the English ‘Lady chapels’ belong, and from this time the lily appears as a striking architectural ornament. The Cistercians, especially, who, not less than the children of St. Dominic, regarded the Virgin as their patroness, adopted this emblem in their churches; and their ‘carved work of

\* *Magnum Speculum Exemplorum*, quoted by Dr. Rock, *Church of the Fathers*, iii. 247.



open lilies' still graces with its mournful beauty the ruined aisles and cloisters of Fountains, of Rievaulx, and of Kirkstall. The Cistercians, indeed, had their own story of the lily. There was a brother of their order so rude and so unlettered that he could be taught nothing, and could retain nothing in his memory beyond the 'Ave Maria' of the angelical salutation. But this he repeated incessantly. At last he died; and from his grave there sprang up a lily of pure gold, with the words 'Ave Maria' traced on every leaf.

Although it would be impossible to find a more beautiful or striking emblem of the Virgin than the lily, it has a far higher value for us from the fact that it was a flower of this species to which our Lord referred in the Sermon on the Mount. Could we determine with any certainty the exact species on which the glance of our blessed Lord fell when He bade His hearers 'consider the lilies of the field,' there is surely no flower in the world which we should regard with equal interest. But this is not easy. The plains westward of the Lake of Gennesareth, which surround the 'Mount of Beatitudes,' are covered at different seasons of the year with liliaceous flowers of many kinds, nearly all of which are brightly coloured. Pococke saw tulips growing wild in great numbers, and conjectured that they were the 'lilies of Solomon.' Sir J. E. Smith thought the plant was the *Amaryllis lutea*, whose golden flowers cover the fields of the Levant in autumn; but later travellers, with far more probability, regard the Chalcedonian, or scarlet Martagon lily, as having been that referred to by our Lord. This, which was formerly known as the 'lily of Byzantium,' is found from the Adriatic to the Levant, and is most abundant throughout the district of Galilee, where almost the only plant which disputes the pre-eminence with it is the rhododendron. It is, moreover, in blossom precisely at that season of the year (the early summer) when the Sermon on the Mount is generally thought



to have been spoken ; and its tall pyramids of scarlet flowers brighten the plain with such touches of strong colour as are visible at a great distance, and might fitly suggest a comparison with the royal robes of Solomon. There is, it would seem, much reason for regarding the scarlet Martagon as the lily of our Lord's discourse, but it is only quite recently that its claims have received due consideration. The great gardeners of former days—Benedictine and Cistercian, monk and nun—looked upon the lily of the valley as the true 'flower of the field.' Although it now grows wild in many parts of England, it is not a native, and may have been introduced from Southern Europe by some Brother 'Pacificus,' whom we may picture to ourselves as tending the plant with loving care in the garden of his monastery, and watching reverently for the first unfolding of its blossoms. Like the great white lily, the lily of the valley was especially dedicated to the Virgin, and the folk-lore which surrounds it in England is always connected with purity and holiness. It grows freely in some parts of St. Leonard's Forest in Sussex, and is there said to have sprung from the blood of St. Leonard, who once fought in the forest for three successive days with a mighty worm or 'fire-drake.' Although at last victorious, the saint was severely wounded in the struggle, and wherever his blood fell to the ground lilies of the valley sprang up in profusion.

The rose, it need hardly be said, is as much an emblem of the Virgin as the lily, with which latter flower the 'rose of Sharon' is united in the text already quoted. Yet it is doubtful, not only whether the original word is here rightly translated 'rose,' but whether the rose is mentioned at all in any part of the sacred volume. The oleander and the rhododendron are, no doubt, the true plants in many places where the English translation uses the word rose; and the rose of Sharon is, in all probability, the large, single yellow Narcissus—a flower common in Palestine, and one that has always

been highly esteemed in the East. 'He who has two cakes of bread,' Mahomed is reported to have said, 'let him sell one of them for some flowers of the narcissus ; for bread is the food of the body, but narcissus is the food of the soul.' Venerable, however, as is the renown of the narcissus—the antique flower-crown of the 'great goddesses'—

μεγάλαι θεαῖν  
ἀρχαῖον στεφάνωμ'

we are hardly disposed to recognise it as a rival of the rose, least of all in a country which displays the rose as its emblem, although the 'rose of England' can hardly trace itself higher than the days of the great wars, which

'Sent, between the red rose and the white,  
A thousand souls to death and deadly night.'

The northern portal of the cathedral at Upsal is covered with sculptured roses, which Scheffer, the historian of the place, thought were intended to illustrate the fact that the first preachers of Christianity in the North had come from England.\* But he need hardly have gone so far afield. The rose has always been an ecclesiastical emblem, and in heathen days it was a mystic flower in both Germany and Scandinavia. The apse of the venerable cathedral of Hildesheim is nearly covered by a wild rose, the roots of which are within the crypt. It was, says the tradition, growing on the spot before the foundations of the church were laid by Charles the Great, and it lays claim accordingly to an antiquity of more than a thousand years. We are, perhaps, fairly entitled to conclude that the present tree is a representative of a long line of ancestors which may have flourished here before the days of St. Boniface, and have marked Hildesheim as a sacred site to be christianized by the erection of a church. For the rose was under the special protection of dwarfs and elves, who

\* Scheffer, *Upsalia Antiqua*, p. 173.

were ruled—so the Heldenbuch tells us - by their mighty king Laurin, the lord of the Rose Garden :—

‘ Four portals to the garden lead, and when the gates are closed  
No living wight dare touch a rose, ’gainst his strict command opposed ;  
Whoe’er would break the golden gates, or cut the silken thread,  
Or who would dare to crush the flowers down beneath his tread,  
Soon for his pride would leave to pledge a foot and hand ;  
Thus Laurin, King of Dwarfs, rules within his land.\*’

Is not King Laurin the enchanted prince of ‘ Beauty and the Beast,’ of whose roses we have all heard ?

The rose, however, sprung from the blood of Adonis, was the flower of Aphrodite before the Dwarf King had planted his mysterious garden. A new origin was devised for it in Christian times, and Lord Lindsay has quoted the legend as an example of the infinite superiority of the Christian ‘symbolism of mute nature’ to that of the elder world. It was when a holy maiden of Bethlehem, ‘blamed with wrong and slandered,’ was doomed to death by fire, that, says Sir John Mandeville, ‘she made her prayers to our Lord that he would help her, as she was not guilty of that sin.’ Then the fire was suddenly quenched, and the burning brands became red ‘roseres,’ and the brands that were not kindled white ‘roseres’ full of roses. ‘And theise weren the first roseres and roses, bothe white and red, that ever any man saughe.’† Henceforth the rose became the flower of martyrs. It was a basket of roses that the martyr-saint Dorothea sent to the notary Theophilus from the garden of Paradise ; and roses, said the romance, sprang up over all the field of Roncevaux, where Roland and the ‘douze pairs’ had stained the soil with their blood. As an emblem of the Virgin, the rose, both white and red, appears at a very early period, and it was especially so recognised by St. Dominic, when

\* *Heldenbuch*, s. iv., ‘The Garden of Roses.’

† *Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, p. 70.

he instituted the devotion of the rosary with direct reference to the life of St. Mary. The prayers appear to have been symbolised as roses. There is a story of a 'lordsman, who had gathered much goods of his lord's,' and who had to pass with his treasure through a wood in which thieves were waiting for him. When he entered the wood, he remembered that he had not that day said 'Our Lady's saulter'; and, as he knelt to do so, the Virgin came and placed a garland on his head, and 'at each Ave she set a rose in the garland that was so bryghte that all the wood shone thereof.' He was himself ignorant of it; but the thieves saw the vision, and allowed him to pass unharmed.\*

The Virgin, as we have seen, succeeded Freyja in the 'calendar' of Northern flowers. The two 'white' gods of Valhalla—Baldur and Heimdallr—both of whom represent the sun, and whose peculiar epithet referred to the dazzling brightness of sunlight, were replaced in a similar manner by St. John the Baptist, whose midsummer festival is marked, all over Europe, by so many remains of solar worship. He is himself called 'White Saint John' in some old German and Gallic calendars.† Flowers with large sun-shaped discs, either white or golden-yellow, were dedicated to Baldur, as the sun-god; and it was in this manner that the hypericum became the peculiar property of St. John, and, as the 'fuga dæmonum,' was so powerful in repelling the works of darkness;—

'Trefoil, vervain, John's wort, dill,  
Hinder witches of their will.'

One species of St. John's wort (*Hypericum quadrangulare*, or *perforatum*) has its leaves pierced with minute holes, which are said to have been made by the devil with a needle, just as Baldur was pierced with the mistletoe by Loke. The root, too, is marked with red spots, still called 'Baldur's blood' in

\* *Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, p. 70.

† Finn Magnussen, *Lex. Mythol.*, s. v. Baldur.

some parts of Norway, but generally said to be the 'blood of St. John,' and to appear always on the day of his beheading (August 29). The old Northern name of the great horse-daisy was 'Baldur's brow'; and this, with many species of chrysanthemum, all with white or golden flowers, became also dedicated to St. John. The attributes of the Baptist, however, are sometimes shared in a remarkable manner by St. John the Evangelist; and the golden 'sunflowers,' as these chrysanthemums were formerly called (the plant now known by this name is an introduction from Peru), are occasionally introduced in representations of the latter saint with singular beauty and fitness. Thus, in stained glass of the twelfth century, filling a window in the apse of the church of St. Remi, at Rheims, the Virgin and St. John appear on either side of the cross, the heads of both encircled by aureoles, having sunflowers inserted in their outer circles. The flowers are turned towards the Saviour on the cross, as toward their true 'sun.' The marygold—one of the Virgin's flowers—is itself a chrysanthemum.

St. John appropriated the flowers of light and sunshine. The hammer-wielding Thor, who fought with the frost giants, is replaced by St. Olaf, St. George, or St. Michael, all of whom fought with monsters and dragons; and sometimes by St. Christopher, whose figure was gigantic, like Thor's. The houseleek, with its broad, matted scales, which had been 'Thor's beard'—'Donnerbaert'—thought, as being under the protection of the thunder-god, to keep off lightning, for which reason Charles the Great ordered it to be planted on the roofs of all his dwellings\*—became 'St. George's beard.' One

\* The order occurs in the *Capitulaire de Villis*, where all the plants are enumerated which were to be cultivated in the gardens of the different royal villas. 'Jewsbeard,' by which name the houseleek is known in some parts of England, is a corruption of 'Jovis-barba.' This is the name given to the plant in the Capitular. It belonged to Jupiter in the south, in the same manner as to Thor in the north.

species of *Osmunda (crispa)* is in Norway called 'St. Olaf's beard.' It is elsewhere known as 'Thor's root'; an additional reason, perhaps, for regarding its far more beautiful cousin, our own royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), the 'Herb Christopher' of Gerard, as having been anciently connected with the Northern god. No one who has seen this stateliest of ferns in its own most favoured haunts—some sheltered Cornish valley, the banks of a rushing Dartmoor stream, or the wooded margin of Grasmere or Killarney,—

'——— like Naiad by the side  
Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere  
Sole sitting on the shores of old romance,'—

will doubt that its size and remarkable appearance—especially in autumn, when its deep-green fronds take all the varied crimsons of the sycamore—must have always claimed attention. 'Osmund the waterman' is one of its old English names; and the white centre of its root is the 'heart of Osmund.' Osmund—the word means 'God's protection'—is said, but apparently without direct authority, to have been a name of Thor; and some legend connected with that god's many fights and wanderings may have been once attached to the royal fern. The legend is, it may be feared, effectually lost, for we cannot accept the often-quoted story of the Loch Fyne fisherman as anything but a very modern piece of folk-lore. Perhaps after all, the half-mystery that clings about the plant renders it more attractive to the imagination than if we had its legend at full length; and whether the Christian giant has or has not in this instance succeeded the Northern god—as he certainly has in many others—his story is never more appropriately recalled to us than where the river-bank is crowned by the towering fronds of the gigantic 'herb Christopher.'

The name of the wise, white-bearded Odin does not seem to



have been connected with many plants. His, however, was the blue-flowered *Geranium sylvaticum*, of which the old German name was 'Gottësgnad,' 'God's grace,' and to which Gerard gives the name of *Geranium gratia Dei*. It was probably thus known in monastic herbaries, but it had been 'Odin's grace' or 'Odin's favour' in the days of heathenism, and is still so called occasionally in Iceland, where it is common. Its large sky-blue flowers were formerly gathered there for dyeing a blue-grey, although the art is said to be now lost. The grey vests and kirtles of the champions of the Sagas were probably stained with this dye. The colour is said to have been 'fittest for fighting men'; and we can hardly help connecting the grey cloak or 'hackle,' in which Odin was always wrapped when he appeared on middle earth, with the flower of 'Odin's favour,' from which the dye was procured. The hood, or 'tarn' cap—the cap of darkness, which enabled those who carried it to become invisible at will, and which also formed part of Odin's attire—is represented by another plant,—the blue aconite, sometimes called 'Odin's helm.' Its more general names, however, were 'Thor's hat' and 'Tyr's helm'; since the helmlike shape of its flowers suggested the two great fighting-gods of the North, rather than the wiser Odin. The aconite is one of the native plants of Northern Europe; and when the Benedictines invaded the domains of Thor, it became 'monk's hood,' the cowl of the good brothers replacing the helm of Tyr.

Another species of geranium—the crane's-bill (*G. Robertiana*)—is connected, if not with the more powerful gods of Valhalla, at least with the elves and wood spirits, who were their contemporaries. In some parts of England it is known as 'Herb Robert'; in France as 'Robin des bois'; and in Germany as 'Ruprecht's kraut.' Ruprecht is the 'knecht Ruprecht' of German household stories; the same, to all appearance, as our Robin Goodfellow, with whose name his

own is, in fact, identical;\* and the flower that loves to fix itself on old walls, on ruins, and on the roofs of solitary farm-houses, is thus the property of the half-kindly, half-mischievous sprite who, like itself, haunted hearth and 'byre' as a household goblin. Another plant, our 'Good King Henry' (*Chenopodium*), the German 'Gut Heinrich,' 'Roth Heinrich,' found in large green masses in nearly the same situations as the geranium, no doubt belongs to one of Robin's elfish companions; for the names 'Heinz' and 'Heinrich' are favourites with German dwarfs and kobolds. It does not appear that the king of the elves was anywhere so called; and it is possible that the English name may be traced to some confusion with the sainted Henry of Lancaster. The wild oat (*Avena fatua*) of the English proverb is the 'dwarf's grass' of Northumberland; but in this case the dwarf is the savage 'brown man of the moors,' and no playful Robinet. He has taken the place of Loke, the evil god of the North; and the wild oat is still called 'Loke's hair' in Jutland, where the proverb touching a careless scapegrace runs, 'Loke is sowing his seed in him.' The Danish saying is so far better than the English, that it distinctly recognises the tares as the sowing of the 'enemy.'

Herb Robert and its fellows have led us again into the pleasant company of the small people, with whom we set out. Besides the plants which have been directly named from them, there are many which have been associated with them in ancient folk-lore, and which, in all probability, were connected with elf-land and its inhabitants long before the introduction of Christianity. We ought, perhaps, to place in the former division the foxglove, whether its name really commemorates the small 'folk,' or Reynard himself, who is

\* The old German 'Hruodperaht' passed into Ruotperht and (the modern form) Ruprecht. From Ruotperht came the Norman 'Robert,' Grimm, *D. Myth.*, p. 472.



so often made the companion of the fairies in German house-stories. The 'lusmore,' or 'great herb,' as the plant is well called in Ireland, where it colours many a wild hill-side with a gorgeous mass of purple, is said to recognise the 'green men of peace' when they pass through the air, invisible to mortal eye, and to salute them by bending its stately wand of blossoms. The foxglove is a worthy pensioner of Oberon. It is less easy to account for his choice of the rosemary, the 'ellegrin,' 'elves-green' of Denmark, and the 'alecrim' of Spain, where the name seems to be a corruption of the true Northern word, introduced by the Gothic conquerors. But the virtues of rosemary were formerly regarded as very great. It was used at weddings, gilt, like oak-leaves on King Charles's day; and was hung about the porch and door-posts, to bring good luck into the household. It kept off thieves; and, best of all, it could make old folks young again. There was once, says 'Galiene'—in whom we are to recognise the wise physician Galen—a gouty and crooked old queen, who looked back to her dancing days with longing regret. So—

'Of rosmaryn she took six pownde,  
And ground it well in a stownde,'

and then mixed it with the water, in which she bathed three times a day, taking care to anoint her head with 'gode balm' afterwards. Her old flesh fell away; and she became so young, tender, and fresh, that she began to look out for a husband.\*

For the most part, the plants and trees which have been affected by the fairies take us into the wild and romantic places which the good neighbours were themselves believed chiefly to frequent. Yet it is remarkable that many of the plants which we should naturally expect to find thus selected are almost unnoticed in folk-lore or tradition. The primrose

\* The story is from an old English poem on the virtues of rosemary, printed by Wright and Halliwell, *Reliquiæ Antiquæ*, i. 195.

has no fairy legend belonging to it. The golden furze, the glory of English commons, is, so far as we know, absolutely without record in any folk-lore ; and even the heather itself, although, from its covering their moors and mosses, it has a certain obscure connection with elves and pixies, is without any definite story or tradition. It can hardly have been the wide diffusion and great abundance of these plants which kept them from a place in general folk-lore, since the ferns—their companions on the breezy upland, in the depths of the wood or in the rocky mountain glen—are distinguished by an unusual amount of such tradition. The root of the common bracken, cut across, not only displays the figure of an oak-tree, but foretells by its markings much that is of special interest to the investigator, always supposing that he has the power to read them aright. But it is on the eve of St. John, when all the hosts of elf-land are abroad in greatest power, that the fern becomes most mysterious. It then puts forth, at dusk, a small blue flower, which soon disappears ; and the wonderful seed, quickly ripening, falls from the plant at midnight. He who ‘hath the receipt of fern-seed may walk invisible.’\* It must be carefully caught in a white napkin as it falls: and the elves will no doubt ‘whisk about the ears’ of the catcher, as Aubrey declares they did in his days about the ears of one who undertook the adventure. These passages are well known. There is a curious reference to the old belief in the works of Dean Jackson, one of the best and most learned divines of the seventeenth century, which has been less frequently quoted :—

‘It was my hap,’ he writes, ‘since I undertook the ministry, to question an ignorant soul (whom, by undoubted report, I had known to have been seduced by a teacher of unhallowed arts to make a dangerous experiment) what he saw or heard when he watcht the falling of the *fern-seed* at an unseasonable and suspicious hour. “Why,” quoth he, fearing (as his brief reply occasioned me to conjecture)

\* *King Henry IV.*, part i., act 2, scene 1.

lest I should press him to tell before company what he had voluntarily confessed unto a friend in secret some fourteen years before, "do you think that the devil hath aught to do with that good seed? No; it is in the keeping of the *King of Fayries*, and he, I know, will do me no harm, although I should watch it again." Yet had he utterly forgotten this king's name, upon whose kindness he so presumed, until I remembered it unto him out of my reading in *Huon of Bordeaux*.

'And having made this answer, he began to pose me thus:—"Sir, you are a scholar, and I am none. Tell me what said the Angel to Our Lady? or what conference had Our Lady with her cousin Elizabeth concerning the birth of St. John the Baptist?"

'As if his intention had been to make bystanders believe that he knew somewhat more on this point than was written in such books as I use to read.

'Howbeit, the meaning of his riddle I quickly conceived, and he confessed to be this: that the Angel did foretell John Baptist should be born at that very instant in which the *fern-seed*, at other times invisible, did fall; intimating, further (as far as I could then perceive), that this saint of God had some extraordinary virtue from the *time or circumstance* of his birth.\*

The name of the 'King of Fayries,' who presented Sir Huon of Bordeaux with the enchanted horn, whose sound would bring fairy help to the knight whenever he might need it, was Oberon, which Mr. Keightley has shown to be identical with 'Elberich.' It was apparently in the picturesque romance of Huon that Shakespeare found the name which now shines upon all the world in so dazzling a light of poetry.

Less famous, perhaps, than the fern, but almost as mysterious in its direct connection with the elfin races, is the mountain-ash, or rowan; and into what lovely places—what wild, heathy coppices—what solitary hollows of the moorland—its very name takes us! As we write there rises before us a half-wooded glen on the skirts of Dartmoor, where the hill-stream descends from ledge to ledge in a succession of falls, filling all the place with its wild music. At the foot of one of the larger waterfalls rises a mountain-ash of great age

\* *Jackson's Works*, vol. i., p. 916 (London, 1673). The passage is given in *Choice Notes from Notes and Queries—Folk Lore*, p. 64.

and size ; its clusters of scarlet berries sparkling in the gleams of sunlight that sweep across, and forming an admirable foreground to the grey, lichen-tinted rocks, and the patches of oaken coppice and underwood, with which the steep sides of the glen are lined. It is completely Wordsworth's picture :—

‘ ————— the pool  
Glow at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks  
Are brightened round her.’\*

No more perfect trysting-place for the pixies could possibly be imagined ; and they were accordingly often seen in old times, says tradition, under the branches of their favourite tree—a certain proof that the pixies are, after all, of no very evil nature. For the rowan is the especial property of the ‘light’ elves ; and crosses made from its wood, or sprays of its leaves hung from the rafters, will prevent any evil creature from entering the house or the cattle-sheds. In the old North the tree was called ‘Thor’s helper,’ because it bent itself to his grasp, when on his way to the land of the frost giants he had to cross a river which a sorceress had made to overflow. Hence the tree was greatly revered by the Norsemen. At Modrufell, on the north coast of Iceland, is, or was, a large rowan, always on Christmas eve stuck full of torches, which no wind could possibly extinguish ; and one of the Orkneys possessed a still more mysterious tree, with which the fate of the islands was bound up, since, if a leaf was carried away, the Orkneys would pass to some foreign lord. Veneration for the mountain-ash, however, was by no means confined to the Scandinavian north. Many a Welsh churchyard had its ancient rowan, taking the place of the yew-tree in England ; and small crosses made from its wood were solemnly distributed on certain festivals, as a protection from evil spirits. The great beauty of the tree—covered in spring with its clusters of white flowers, and in autumn bright with scarlet berries, both of which render it a conspicuous object

\* *Exc.* : ‘Churchyard among the Mountains.’

in the woods — may account to some extent for the marvellous properties assigned to it ; but it seems also to partake of the sanctity of the ash Yggdrasil ; and it may perhaps be the Western representative of a still more ancient world tree. At Boitpoor, Bishop Heber

'passed a fine tree, with leaves, at a little distance so much resembling those of the mountain-ash, that I was for a moment deceived, and asked if it did not bring fruit? They said, no ; but that it was a very noble tree, being called the Imperial tree for its excellent properties ; that it slept all night, and wakened and was alive all day, withdrawing its leaves if any one attempted to touch them. Above all, however, it was useful as a preservative against magic. A sprig worn in the turban, or suspended over the bed, was a perfect security against all spells, or the evil eye ; inasmuch that the most formidable wizard would not, if he could help it, approach its shade. One, indeed, they said, who was very renowned for his power (like Lorinite, in the Kehama) of killing plants and drying up their sap with a look, had come to this very tree, and gazed on it intently ; but, said the old man, who told me this with an air of triumph, "look as he might, he could do the tree no harm."

The Bishop remarks on the singularity of trees so similar having the same superstitions attached to them. 'Which nation,' he asks, 'is in this case the imitator? or from what common centre are all these common notions derived?'

Lord Lytton has suggested, in his 'Strange Story,' that the wood of certain trees to which magical properties are ascribed may in truth possess virtues little understood, and deserving of careful investigation. The rowan would take its place among these, as would the common hazel, from which the miner's divining rod is always cut. The use of this 'baguette divinatoire,' as it is called by Vallemont, who towards the end of the seventeenth century wrote an elaborate treatise on it, was by no means confined to the search for veins of metal, or for water. It assisted in the pursuit of criminals ; and Vallemont gives the '*histoire surprenant d'un paysan, qui, guidé par la baguette divinatoire, a poursuivi un meurtrier durant plus de 45 lieues sur terre, et plus de 30 lieues en*



mer.' The hazel is so far connected with the elves that, according to the Cornish miners, the rod is guided to the mine by the pixies,—for all the treasures of the earth are in their keeping,—and many a rich lode has been discovered by the songs of the small people heard on the moors at night-fall. In some parts of Germany the call of the cuckoo is thought to disclose mines; and certain plants—the cuckoo's 'bread,' the 'cuckoo flower' (the latter is the large purple orchis very common in England), are believed to grow in most luxuriance where the depths of the earth are rich in metal. The cuckoo has always been one of the chief birds of augury, and many flowers which appear nearly at the same time with it have received its name and a certain share of its prophetic character. One of these was perhaps the plantain, or waybread, said to have been once a maiden, who, watching by the wayside for her lover, was changed into the plant which still loves to fix itself beside the beaten path. Once in seven years it becomes a bird,—either the cuckoo or the cuckoo's servant, the 'dinnick,' as it is called in Devonshire, the German 'wiedhopf,' which is said to follow its master everywhere.\*

Although it is not impossible that almost every plant which the old herbalists record as bearing the name of some saint, or as distinguished by some specially religious epithet, might be traced back, if we had the means, to the days of heathenism, there are many of which we have only the later 'canonization,' and which we must accept as the more direct representatives of the monastic garden and herbary. How amply these were stocked, and with how many of the plants most famous in ancient leechcraft, is evident from a glance at the very curious plans of the great monastery of St. Gall, drawn up, it is said, by Eginhard, toward the end of the

\* Grimm, *D. Myth.*, p. 787. The latter part of the belief is a piece of Devonshire folk-lore.

eighth century.\* In these, every bed in the garden is marked out, and the name of the herb with which it should be filled carefully inserted. It was, no doubt, from their great virtues as 'all heals,' or 'singular wound herbs,' that such names as angelica' and 'archangel' were bestowed on the plants that still bear them. The 'herba benedicta,' 'herb bennet,' the 'blessed' herb (*Geum urbanum*) was a remedy for nearly all diseases under the sun. Its graceful trefoiled leaf, and the five golden petals of its blossoms, symbolizing the Holy Trinity and the five wounds of our Lord, early attracted the attention of the artist-monk; and toward the end of the thirteenth century the plant frequently occurs as an architectural decoration, sometimes in patterns on the walls, and sometimes in the leafage encircling pier capitals. The vervain (verbena), called the 'holy herb,' should perhaps have been placed in the former division, since it was, according to Pliny, one of the sacred plants of the Druids, and was gathered by them with all manner of mystic ceremonies. It is not easy to see why its slender spikes of grey flowers should have been held in such repute, unless the old rhyme, itself half a charm, gives us the reason :—

' Hail to thee, holy herb !  
 Growing on the ground  
 On the Mount of Olivet  
 First wert thou found.  
 Thou art good for many an ill,  
 And healest many a wound ;  
 In the name of sweet Jesu  
 I lift thee from the ground.'

The trefoil, or 'Herb Trinity,' has an especial interest from the use which, as tradition asserts, was made of it by St. Patrick (although the story is to be found in none of the lives—not even the latest and most legendary—printed by

\* These plans were first published by Mabillon, in the *Annales Ord. Benedict.*, and have been made the subject of a very interesting paper by Professor Willis, in the *Archæological Journal*. Vol. 5.

Colgan), as an illustration of the divine mystery. The leaf which is now generally recognized as the Irish emblem is that of the white clover, but the name shamrock (seamrog) seems to be generic, and is applied also to the purple clover, the speedwell, the pimpernel, and the wood-sorrel. The leaf of the Herb Trinity is of course 'noisome to witches.' The veronica, or small speedwell, one of the plants to which the name shamrock is given, was also effective against evil spells, and its bright blue flowers were thought to display, in their form and markings, a representation of the kerchief of St. Veronica, impressed with the features of our Lord. Many other flowers received the names of saints for less definite reasons, but partly, perhaps, because they blossomed about the time of the saint's festival, and partly because they were found in plenty about the place which contained his shrine. Although the 'Canterbury bells' which abound in the Kentish woods have only an indirect connection with St. Thomas,—having been so called from the small horse-bells of the pilgrims, which they resembled in shape,—the small red pink (*Dianthus prolifer*), found wild in the neighbourhood of Rochester, is perhaps the original 'sweet Saint William,' for the word 'Saint' has only been dropped since days which saw the demolition of St. William's shrine in the cathedral. This, however, is but a conjecture, and we must be content to remain uncertain whether the masses of bright flowers which form one of the chief glories of old-fashioned gardens commemorate St. William of Rochester, St. William of York, or—likeliest, perhaps, of the three—St. William of Aquitaine, the half-soldier, half-monk, whose fame was so widely spread throughout the south of Europe.

The charm and tranquillity of the monastic garden—a world of peaceful beauty often set down in the midst of the wildest woods and mountains—have been worthily dwelt upon by M. de Montalembert, the pleasantest and most eloquent, if in



some respects the most one-sided, of the many advocates who of late years have taken in hand the cause of the monks. To the Benedictines and Cistercians—the first great agriculturists of Europe, and the first great gardeners, the true predecessors of the Hendersons and Veitchs of our own day—we are indebted for many of the old well-loved flowers that will always keep their places in spite of their gayer but less permanent modern rivals. The wall-flower that ‘scents the dewy air’ about the ruined arches of its convent, the scarlet anemone, that flowers about Eastertide, and is called in Palestine the ‘blood-drops of Christ,’ the blossoming almond-tree, one of the symbols of the Virgin, and the marygold, that received her name, are but a few of the old friends, brought long ago from Syria by some pilgrim monk, and spread from his garden over the whole of Europe. Within those quiet walls the brother Pacificus of his monastery found material for the studies of leaf, flower, and insect with which to decorate the borders of his missals and breviaries; and the sculptor could there arrange his wreaths of white lilies, or his branches of ‘herb bennet,’ before transferring them in stone to the capitals of the neighbouring church:—

‘Nor herb nor flow’ret glistened there  
But was carved in the cloister arches as fair.’

In the cloister garden, too, the monk was wont to meditate on the marvels of the plants that surrounded him, and to find all manner of mysterious emblems in their marks and tracings. Many plants displayed the true figure of the cross. It might be seen in the centre of the red poppy; and there was a ‘zucca’ (fig) at Rome, in the garden of the Cistercian convent of Santa Potentiana, the fruit of which, when cut through, showed a green cross inlaid on the white pulp, and having at its angles five seeds, representing the five wounds. This mysterious fig is described and figured by Bosio, who compares it to the ‘Crocefisso de la cepa’ at

Valladolid, a representation of our Lord on the cross, formed naturally, though 'mirabilmente,' by the twisted growth of a vine root.\* The banana, in the Canaries, is never cut with a knife, because it also exhibits a representation of the crucifixion, just as the fern-root shows an oak-tree. But the fame of the greatest of all such marvels arrived at Rome in the year 1609, whilst Bosio was labouring over his ponderous folio on the 'Triumphs of the Cross'; and he pauses accordingly, half doubtful whether he ought to say anything about the 'stupendo e maraviglioso fiore' of which he had been told, seeing that it was a matter almost too 'mostruosa e straordinaria' for belief; but quite unwilling to omit all notice of it, especially as he was daily receiving new confirmation of its wonders. The 'maraviglioso fiore' was the Passion flower of the New World.

Drawings and descriptions of the Passion flower were published for the first time, in both Spain and Italy, in 1609. Bosio's chief authority was Father Emmanuello de Villegas, an Augustinian monk, and a native of Mexico, who was at this time visiting Rome. But Father Emmanuel's wonderful account had been confirmed, we are assured, by many personages 'di qualità e di gravità,' who had travelled in New Spain; and especially by certain Mexican Jesuits. It would seem, says Bosio, that in this wonderful and mysterious 'flower of the five wounds' ('flor de las cinco llagas'), as the Spaniards called it, the Creator of the world had chosen to represent the principal emblems of His Son's Passion; so that in due season it might assist, when its marvels should be explained to them, in the conversion of the heathen people in whose country it grew. He goes on to describe the flower

\* 'Ha nel viso non sò che del Divino; ed una Maestà tanto venerabile, e tremèdida, ch'empie subito di rispetto, di timore e divotione, i cuori di chiunque ne gli occhi vuol sissargli il guardo.' Bosio, *La Trionfante e Gloriosa Croce*. Roma, 1610.

as follows :—The upper petals are tawny ('di color leonato') in Peru ; in New Spain they are white, tinged with rose colour. The fringe-like filaments above are blood-red ; 'as though referring to the scourge with which our Lord was beaten.' In the midst of the flower rises the column to which He was bound ; and above are the nails, both of a 'clear green.' Above, again, is the crown of thorns, surrounded by a kind of veil of threads—seventy-two in number—(the traditional number of the thorns on our Lord's crown), coloured like a peacock's feather ('di color pavonazzo'). In the centre of the flower, and under the column, are five marks or spots, of a blood colour, 'clearly representing the five chief wounds that Christ received on the cross.' The plant, he continues, is rich in leaves, which in shape resemble the iron of a pike or lance-head, and refer to that with which our Lord's side was pierced. At nightfall the flower closes entirely ; and in the day it only half unfolds itself, keeping always the form of a bell, so that the mysteries so wonderfully enclosed in it cannot be generally seen. Bosio, however, thought proper to draw it fully opened, 'per gusto de' pii lettori'—who would thus have the comfort of contemplating in the flower the 'profound marvels of its, and of our own, Creator.' The close shrouding of the flower, he suggests, may have been designed by Infinite Wisdom as an indication that the mysteries of the cross were not to be revealed to the heathen people of those countries until such time as it seemed good to Him.

Bosio had never, of course, seen the flower ; and the figure of it in his book is as direct a representation of the emblems of the Passion as might be found in any Italian church. Similar engravings were published in the same year in Spain and at Bologna, where 'molti spiriti elevati' celebrated the marvellous discovery by many ingenious compositions and 'vaghe poesie.' Judging from the drawings and descriptions

of the monks who first brought the account to Europe, Bosio was fully justified in asserting that 'no more marvellous or stupendous flower was ever seen before, nor ever will be seen by any one.' In Italy it at once received the name of 'Fior della Passione,' which it has ever since borne; but soon after Bosio's folio had been published the plant itself was brought to Rome, where it flowered for the first time in the gardens of Cardinal Odoardo Farnese. Aldinus, the keeper of those famous gardens, which then probably contained a greater number of rare plants than any others in Europe, published in 1625 a thin folio, with very beautiful and accurate engravings of their principal rarities.\* Among these is the Passion flower, to which he gives its native name of 'Maracot.' It had been celebrated, he says, by poets and orators; philosophers had investigated its marvels; doctors and leeches had commended it; the sick eagerly sought after it; theologians wondered at it, and pious Christians venerated it. But a more accurate description of it was much needed. Aldinus figures it accordingly with great care and with perfect accuracy; and then, setting aside former exaggerations, he proceeds to show what theologians may really find in the plant. The nails at the top are so perfectly expressed that the resemblance could hardly be increased. In the open flower they are twisted, and marked with black spots, as if with blood. The rudiment of the fruit, at the bottom of the ovary, may be compared to the sponge offered to our Lord upon the cross. The star form of the half-opened flower may represent the star of the Magi; but the five petals, opened, the five wounds. The base of the ovary is the column. The filaments are the scourges spotted with blood; and the purple circle which marks them is the crown

\* 'Exactissima descriptio rariorum quarundam plantarum, quæ continentur Romæ, in Horto Farnesiano; Tobia Aldino Cesenate auctore.' Romæ, 1625.

of thorns. The white petals represent the purity and brightness of our Lord, and His white robe. The under leaves (*corniculata folia*), white inside and green without, figure the hope and purity with which each one of the faithful should embrace and consider the mysteries of the Passion. The green leaves of the plant spring from it singly, for there is one God ; but are triply divided, for there are three Persons. The plant itself would climb towards heaven, but cannot do so without support ; so the Christian, whose nature it is to climb, requires Divine help to sustain him. The plant, if cut down, will spring up again ; so whoever holds the mysteries of the Passion in his heart, will receive no hurt from the world. Its fruit is sweet and delectable ; and the Passion of our Lord has brought sweet and delectable fruit to us. So, according to Aldinus, this wonderful plant may be explained. But after all, he cannot see so much mystery in it, 'nisi per vim' ; for the chief emblem, the cross, does not appear ; and there is no lance.

The first to describe and to figure the Passion flower in England was Parkinson, in his 'Paradisus Terrestris,' published in 1629. A distinct species, the *incarnata* of Linnæus, seems to have been brought to England from Virginia, about the same time as others were introduced at Rome ; and Parkinson, who calls this 'brave plant' the 'surpassing delight of all flowers,' describes its flowers as 'making a tripartite show of colours, most delightfull,' and 'of a comfortabell sweet scent, very acceptabell.' His figure is very accurate ; and he has set beside it the first stiff drawing, copied from Bosio, so that the errors of the 'superstitious Jesuite' might be clear to all men. Master Parkinson apparently preferred that the honours of the plant should be assigned to that 'bright occidental star,' Queen Elizabeth, and named it, in memory of her, the 'Virgin climber.' But, in spite of his loyalty, the Passion flower has retained its original name and

significance. It is the one great contribution of the Western hemisphere to the symbolical flowers of Christendom ; and its starlike blossoms have taken a worthy place beside the mystical roses and trefoils of ecclesiastical decoration ; never more appropriately than in the ironwork of the beautiful choir-screens at Lichfield and at Hereford.

### III.

#### THE DOGS OF FOLK-LORE, HISTORY, AND ROMANCE.\*

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‘O N n’a dans la vie qu’un chien,’ writes M. Alphonse Karr, ‘comme on n’a qu’un amour.’ Those who are sufficiently hardened to dispute the second proposition will probably extend their scepticism to the first ; but there is a sense in which it is undoubtedly true that a man may have but one dog belonging to him, although he must perhaps, first of all, become a hero. Sir Tristrem may have possessed many a ‘good greyhound’ besides Hodain ; but only Hodain’s name has floated down the stream of tradition and romance in close association with that of his master. The canine ‘following’ of Sir Walter Scott was throughout his life an extensive one. The names of many good creatures are preserved in Lockhart’s delightful pages ; but it is only Maida whose figure is really familiar to us, and who, ‘der leiblung hund von Walter Scott,’ appears on the lids of German snuff-boxes and on the image-trays of wandering Italians. Certain dogs are thus raised into celebrity by the side of their masters ; and a long catalogue of such canine worthies might easily be recorded, whose merits have perhaps been too much neglected. Numberless are the excellent and virtuous animals whose good deeds are celebrated in collections of canine anecdotes, and in essays on canine instinct. We say not a word in their dispraise. They may possibly have been better members of society than many of the dogs whose names have been sung by poets and recorded in history. The wheel of Fortune

\* *Quarterly Review*, January, 1861.



may be as capricious in its revolutions, and the trump of Fame send forth its blasts with as uncertain justice in the world of canine society, as in that of mortal men. Dogs, like their masters, may sometimes be elevated into heroes with but slender reason. Many a terrier and many a hound whose lives are passed in obscure retirement may be as worthy as Hodain or Petieru :—

‘ We trust we have within this realm  
Five hundred good as they ;’

but ‘*caerent vate sacro*.’ No poet has sung them, and no historian has chronicled their deeds. Their virtue must remain its own reward. Our business is with those dogs who, with whatever justice, have attained the summit of renown : though we propose, whilst glancing on our way at the history of the race—to dwell at greater length on what in effect is too closely connected with that history to be altogether separated from it—the position of the canine race in the mysterious world of ‘folk-lore.’

Whilst animals ‘*feræ naturæ*’—the true ‘wild deer’ of forest and mountain—take their places in this shadowy region in accordance with their most conspicuous qualities, and are represented as either entirely good or entirely bad—ill-omened or the reverse—it is remarkable that the domesticated animals, and especially the horse and the dog, which in all ages have been the close companions of man, are made, both in legend and romance, to partake as it were of the mixed nature of man himself, and appear sometimes in close connection with the hosts of evil, and at others, not less conspicuously, as supporters of all that is good. Between such a demon steed as carried off the Witch of Berkeley, and the snow-white charger on which St. Iago sometimes showed himself at the head of the Spanish chivalry, it would not be difficult to trace the connecting links of a long chain, toward the centre of which we should place the Phouka of Ireland—



the sea-horse, half-mischievous, half-playful, occupying the same place in animal folk-lore that the mischievous elves do in the world of spirits. In the same manner the cat descends from the Egyptian divinity—the moon-eyed Pasht or Bubastis, through the ingenious friend of M. de Carabas, and the worthy companion of Whittington, to Rutterkin—the sable familiar who disported himself among the strawberry beds of old Agnes Flower, the famous witch of Suffolk. But as, of all domestic animals, the dog has always been most closely the friend and companion of man, it is in his history, and in the folk-lore connected with him, that the greatest variations occur, and that the two characters may be most distinctly traced.\*

Throughout the East, where the dog wanders in troops, neglected and savage, his name has been a term of reproach from very early, if not the earliest times. We are all familiar with this application of it in the Sacred Writings; in which, indeed, the dog is always regarded as an animal mysteriously unclean. The worst points of canine nature are brought into strong relief among the packs of gaunt, wolf-like hounds which prowl through the streets and under the walls of every Eastern city, and 'make night hideous' with their howling. Thus encountered, the dog is in truth no very attractive creature; and seems fully entitled to the unenviable position he occupies in Oriental metaphor. Yet the nobler qualities of the dog—his fidelity and sagacity—must have been recognized from the first. In all the Indo-European languages, his name, like those of the cow, the sheep, and the horse, belongs to the most primitive class of roots; a sufficient proof that he must have

\* The derivation of the word 'dog' is quite unknown. No explanation of it has been suggested which can be said to be even probable. This is the more remarkable because the word does not occur earlier than the thirteenth century, and has always been confined to England. The Anglo-Saxon 'húnd' has its congeners in all the Teutonic and Scandinavian languages.

been one of the domesticated animals of the great Aryan family in the primeval period, before the dispersion of its several branches and the consequent formation of new dialects. There is, indeed, one very ancient story which occurs under slightly varying forms in the folk-lore of the most widely separated countries and races, and which, in all probability, belonged in its original shape to the same remote period. This is the story which, in its Welsh version, records the services and unhappy end of the faithful hound Gelert; whose last 'bed'—'Beth Gelert'—may be seen in the shape of a long green mound by the traveller who descends the vale of Gwynant in Caernarvonshire. Mr. Dasent, in the very interesting introduction prefixed to his collection of Norse legends, has pointed out (as, indeed, Douce in his Shakspearian notes had done before him) the great antiquity of the story of Gelert; and has traced it upwards through the Latin '*Gesta Romanorum*,' the Arabic original of the '*Seven Wise Masters*,' and Bidpai's fables, to the *Hitopadesa* and the *Pancha-Tantra*. But it is, perhaps, hardly possible to insist on this story in proof of the primitive recognition of canine virtue; since, although a dog is its hero in all its western forms, he is not found in the two most ancient versions. In the *Hitopadesa*, the infant's guardian, whose own life falls a sacrifice to his fidelity, is an otter: in the *Pancha-Tantra*, a mangouete. With a passing recognition of Gelert, therefore, as one of the best and worthiest of his race, we must be content to find our earliest proof that canine merit and canine society were duly appreciated in the East, in those models of favourite dogs—the ancient pets of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon—which have been frequently brought to light during the excavations of the Assyrian palaces. Some of these from the hunting-palace of Esarhaddon at Nineveh may be seen in the British Museum; and show us a large-headed dog of the St. Bernard character, with the tail curled

upwards over his back. A collar of leaves, or of leather or metal wrought into the form of leaves, is sometimes about the neck ; and the name of the dog, generally a word indicative of its hunting prowess, is inscribed on the model. Such were the old-world hounds whom the king delighted to honour : the earliest existing illustrations of canine favouritism ; unless, indeed, we are prepared to accept as a portrait of a still more primitive pet the rough Isle of Skye terrier which lies curled up at the feet of Adam and Eve in Breughel's delightful representation of Paradise, now in the Academy at Brussels.

In ancient Egypt the dog was as completely the companion of man, and as much a favourite in the house, as he is among ourselves at present. The chief domestic favourite was a short-legged dog not unlike our own turnspit ; and especially conspicuous in wall-paintings of the time of Osirtasen ; the choice of which monarch, as Sir Gardner Wilkinson suggests, may, as in later days, have led the taste of the time to fix on a particular breed. The dog was one of the sacred animals of Egypt ; and was specially revered in the nome of Cynopolis, where, on the death of a dog, the members of the household to which he had belonged carefully shaved their whole bodies, and religiously abstained from using the food, of whatever kind, which happened to be in the house at the time. The dog was embalmed throughout Egypt ; and every town had its place of interment for canine mummies. Thus he may be allowed to pass among the ' brutish gods of Nile ' ; but Milton has erred, in common with all the Greek and Latin writers, in his allusion to the ' dog Anubis ' : the peculiar type of which deity was the jackal, and not the dog.\*

The contrast between ancient Egypt, where the dog was everywhere admitted as a household companion, and modern, where the Moslem prejudice against him is in full operation, and where to salute your enemy as ' a Jew's dog,' the lowest

\* Wilkinson's *Ancient Egypt*, 2nd series, vol. ii. p. 144.

canine caste, is the very climax of insult, is sufficiently marked. But even the Mahommedans, whilst they shrink from his touch as defilement, are compelled to recognise the courage and fidelity of the dog. The name given in Arabian romance to the champion of heroic times, 'Mubariz,' 'the single combatant,' is also applied to the canine hero who, sometimes, during the fights which take place among the dogs of Cairo or Medinah, 'when one side has given way, rushes back among the victors, to give his flying friends time to recover heart.\* The singular manner in which the dogs of the latter city divide themselves into two parties, and the skill with which they conduct their battles, are the subjects of constant remark among the Arabs: who, like the races of Northern Europe, look upon the dog as possessed of a mysterious power of discerning the supernatural. He can see the form of Azrael, the angel of death, hovering over the doomed abode, and predicts the coming stroke by his howling. The dog himself, however, is lifted into the region of the supernatural by no less an authority than the Korân. Three animals, and only three, are admitted to share the joys and the repose of Mahommed's paradise:—the camel on which the prophet rode during his famous flight from Mecca; the ass of Balaam; and Kitmer, the dog of the Seven Sleepers, who with his masters entered the cave in which year after year they lay wrapped in mysterious slumber, who fell asleep with them, and who, with them, was at last raised to receive the reward of his care and fidelity.† The Mahommedan legend asserts that, as the seven

\* Burton. *El-Medinah*, ii. 53.

† *Korân*, chap. xviii. 'The Cave.' The Christian tradition, from which Mahommed borrowed his version, will be found, with some very graphic details, in the 'Aurea Legenda' of Jacques de Voraigne. According to it, the sleepers were Christian youths of Ephesus, who fled to the cave to avoid the persecution of the Emperor Decius. Their dog is a purely Arabian addition. It is perhaps worth remarking that another tradition of Ephesus asserted that St. John the Evangelist, who was buried there, was only asleep in the tomb which

youths were on their way to the cavern in which they intended to take refuge from their heathen persecutor, they passed Kitmer, and attempted to drive him away; upon which 'God caused him to speak: and he said, "I love those who are dear unto God; go to sleep, therefore, and I will guard you."' So Kitmer 'stretched forth his forelegs in the mouth of the cave,' and during his sleep of three hundred years turned himself from side to side like his masters, 'lest their lying so long on the ground should consume their flesh.' The utmost stretch of covetousness is expressed in the East by a saying that the miser 'would not throw a bone to the dog of the Seven Sleepers'; whose name, written on letters which have to cross the sea, acts as a talisman to preserve them from miscarriage. The especial rewards prepared for Kitmer in the paradise of the Prophet are unfortunately not recorded; but it is satisfactory to know that this good creature, before disappearing from the region of middle earth, had taken measures for leaving a progeny behind him, by which his size and his virtues are still represented. According to Turkish tradition, Kitmer was a 'Samsún,' or shepherd's dog, as large as an ass. His direct descendants are greatly prized by the wandering races of Turkestan and the great pasture steppes of Central Asia; and Evliya Effendi, the Turkish traveller of the seventeenth century, asserts that, in the three days' procession of trades which passed before the Sultan at

he had prepared for himself; and that the earth above his grave moved with his respiration. (Augustine, *Tract. in Joann.*)

The story of the Seven Sleepers was localized in more than one country. Paul the Deacon (*de Gestis Langobard.* i. 4) asserts that the 'Seven Sleepers of Germany' lie in a cave under a lofty rock on the sea-shore. Their dress is Roman, and continues uninjured by time. The arms and hands of one who wished to steal their clothes withered away. (So the Caliph Mo'awiyah sent men into the cave at Ephesus, who were struck dead by a burning wind.) 'Fortasse,' concludes Paulus Diaconus, 'horum quandoque (quia non aliter nisi Christiani esse putantur), gentes illæ prædicatione salvandæ sunt.'



Constantinople, Kitmer's representatives, 'of the size of asses, and fierce as lions from Africa,' were led along 'in double or triple chains,' covered with trappings of rich cloth, and wearing silver collars and 'neck-rings.' 'They assail,' says Evliya, 'not only the wolves which enter the stables and folds, but dragons also . . . they go into the fire . . . and chase the eagle in the air, and the crocodile in the river. They perform everything they are told to perform; and if bid to do so, will bring down a man from horseback, however stout a fellow he may be.' 'The shepherds,' he concludes, 'look on them as their companions and brethren, and do not object to eat out of the same dish with them.'\*

'The Greeks,' says Mr. Ruskin, 'seem hardly to have done justice to the dog. My pleasure in the entire Odyssey is diminished because Ulysses gives not a word of kindness nor of regret to Argus.'† Not a word: but had the ingenious author of 'Modern Painters' forgotten what he did give him?

'. . . αὐτὰρ ὁ νόσφιν ἰδὼν ἀπομόρξατο δάκρυ  
 Πεῖρα λαθῶν Εὐμαιον . . .

'Odysseus saw, and turned aside  
 To wipe away the tear;

From Eumæus he chose his grief to hide. . . . ‡

The pathos of the scene is, in our judgment, greatly deepened

\* *Travels of Evliya Effendi* (trans. by Von Hammer for the Oriental Translation Fund), vol. i. p. 145. Evliya himself was a true Mahomedan, and regarded the dog with no great respect. 'Although,' he says, 'a sheep brings forth but one a year, yet are all mountains covered with them. Meanwhile, it is a strange thing that dogs and swine have every year many young, so that one would believe that the world would be filled with them; yet God blesses the sheep, because it gets up early and breathes the wind of divine mercy. The swine, on the contrary, turns up the earth with its snout the whole night, and sleeps through the day. The dog likewise barks the whole night, and in the morning, with its tail between its feet, lies down to sleep. Therefore, the young of dogs and swine never reach a long life. This is a wonderful effect of the wisdom of God.' *Id.*, p. 148.

† *Modern Painters*, vol. v.

‡ Maginn's *Homer's Ballads*: 'The Dog Argus.'

by the fact that Ulysses could not possibly give his well-remembered hound 'a word of kindness or regret,' without the risk of his own instant recognition by Eumæus. There is no 'chose to hide' in the original. The son of Laertes had, in fact, no choice in the matter. The dog, it is true, is but rarely noticed, and seldom favourably, by the later Greeks ; but this one picture—the most ancient canine portrait in literature—is also perhaps the finest. Certainly the entire passage is one of the most touching in Homer. 'The words, too, are so calm and still—they seem to grow faint and fainter ;—each foot of the verse falls as if it were counting out the last respiration ; and in effect we witness that last slight and fluttering breath with which life is yielded up :—

"Ἄργον δ' αὖ κατὰ Μοῖρ' ἔλαβεν μέλανος θανάτου  
 Αὐτίκ' ἴδόντ' Ὀδυσῆα εἰκοστῇ ἐνιαυτῷ." \*

Dr. Maginn,\* who gave a translation of this famous passage among his 'Homeric Ballads,' compares with it, of course greatly to Southey's disadvantage, the lines from 'Roderick' which describe the recognition of the repentant Gothic king by his hound Theron. 'Roderick' is now but little read, and the passage is worth extracting :—

'While thus Florinda spake, the dog who lay  
 Before Rusilla's feet, eyeing him long  
 And wistfully, had recognised at length,  
 Changed as he was, and in those sordid weeds,  
 His royal master. And he rose and licked  
 His withered hand, and earnestly looked up  
 With eyes whose human meaning did not need  
 The aid of speech ; and moaned, as if at once  
 To court and chide the long withheld caress.  
 A feeling, uncommixed with sense of guilt  
 Or shame, yet painfulest, thrilled through the King ;  
 But he, to self-control now long inured,  
 Represt his rising heart, nor other tears,  
 Full as his struggling bosom was, let fall,  
 Than seemed to follow on Florinda's words.

\* Gladstone's *Homer*, iii. 410.

Looking toward her then, yet so that still  
 He shunned the meeting of her eye, he said,  
 "Virtuous and pious as thou art, and ripe  
 For Heaven, O Lady ! I will think the man  
 Hath not by his good angel been cast off  
 For whom thy supplications rise . . . . .

\* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \*

Thus having said,  
 Deliberately, in self-possession still,  
 Himself from that most painful interview  
 Dispeeding, he withdrew. The watchful dog  
 Followed his footsteps close. But he retired  
 Into the thickest grove ; there yielding way  
 To his o'erburthened nature, from all eyes  
 Apart, he cast himself upon the ground,  
 And threw his arms around the dog, and cried,  
 While tears streamed down, "Thou, Theron, then, hast known  
 Thy poor lost master, . . . Theron, none but thou !"

The hound Theron and the man Roderick, we may admit, with the learned Doctor, to be far inferior to the hound Argus and the man Ulysses. But we cannot allow that canine instinct is always instantaneous, and that Southey's picture of the dog eying his master 'long and wistfully' is, therefore, a false one. No one who has been accustomed to good canine society will doubt that this gradual recognition is quite as true and as natural as the immediate discovery of the shepherd of the people by Argus, 'ὡς ἐνόησεν Ὀδυσσεύα ἐγγυὺς εἶόντα' ; although the latter may possibly indicate a stronger and more noble nature.

Passing from the old world of Southern Europe to the fresh and free life of the North, we find ourselves at once in the company of those stately deerhounds which rank with the noblest and most intelligent of dogs, and which a Welsh triad classes among the three 'signs of a gentleman'—the other two being his horse and his hawk. Sir Walter Scott delighted to point out how Maida—the most famous of all those dogs, although his descent was scarcely irreproachable—would



station himself, in the pursuit of game or on the look-out for it, just at those points of the landscape where his figure 'told' most picturesquely; suddenly appearing at the entrance of some narrow glen, or 'detaching' himself against the sky on the crest of some long ridge of heather. It is indeed impossible to imagine a creature more completely in harmony with the hunting-ground of the old North—deep forests, with their endless 'shade of melancholy boughs'—grey trackless moorlands—or long mountain ranges, with their glens, and torrents, and precipices; and the picture of King Arthur's hunt over the heaths of Tintagel, or among the woods of Caerlion, would scarcely have been complete had the romance-writers failed to supply the 'clear-faced king' with such a follower as Cavall—the 'hound of deepest mouth,' for whose baying, as the Laureate tells us, Guenever listened as she halted with Geraint on the knoll above the water of Usk. Very famous was Cavall, and numberless his deeds of 'derring do' in pursuit of wolf, boar, and red deer. Whilst hunting the 'wild boar of Troynt,' Cavall left the print of his paw on a certain rock, which afterwards became as famous throughout Breconshire as St. Mildred's footprint in the Isle of Thanet, or the hoofmark of Mahommed's camel at Mecca. King Arthur caused a heap of stones to be piled about the rock—itsself a loose fragment;—for, said the legend, if it were carried off to any distance, it was sure to be found in its old place on the following morning. One of the Breconshire mountains, near the little town of Rhayader Gwy, is still known as 'Carn Cavall'; and Lady Charlotte Guest, in illustration of the remarkable 'Mabinogi' of Killwch and Olwen, which preserves the full story of the boar of Troynt, has engraved a stone from one of the cairns with which the summit of the mountain is covered, marked by an oval indentation so closely resembling the print of a dog's paw as to compel every worthy student of romance to recognise it as a relic of King Arthur's

hound.\* Whether Cavall himself was subsequently laid to rest under this cairn, or whether he followed his master to the enchanted Isle of Avalon, is left uncertain. At any rate he was not less worthy of admission to an 'equal sky' with his lord than Gorban, the white hound of the Welsh bard Ummad, who, in the lament which he poured forth for his old companion in the chase, declares that they would meet again, dog and master, 'on the clouds of their rest.' This, which was the belief of both Celt and Northman, led to the interment of his favourite dog in the chieftain's tomb; and the skeleton of many a noble hound—as famous perhaps in his day as Cavall or Gorban—has been exhumed from the green barrows and moss-grown cairns, the resting-places of the old dead, that dot in such numbers the solitary moors and hill-sides of the North. On some of the remarkable sculptured stones of Scotland—especially on the monument called 'the tomb of Venora,' or Guenever, now in the churchyard of Meigle in Angus—the deerhound appears among a crowd of other figures—hunters, hawk-bearers, and wild animals of all sorts. Rude as are the sculptures on all these stones, the union of great strength with extreme grace of form, especially characterizing the Northern hound, is sufficiently well indicated to allow of its easy recognition; and we may with no great improbability imagine that we see in them the rough portraits of the hounds that once licked the hands of the 'kemp' who sleeps below, by the side of whose bones their own may perhaps be mouldering.

Memorials of a different character occur in various parts of Scotland, of a hound whose reputation is second to none in the whole catalogue of canine worthies,—Bran, the companion of Fingal, and himself deserving of a place among the Fingalian heroes. Bran must have been a troublesome hound, and in size must have far exceeded the gigantic Kitmer, if such very

\* *Mabinogion*, vol. ii. p. 360.

substantial stakes as those which are known as 'Bran's Pillars' were indeed necessary for keeping him in order. The best known of these is the isolated mass of rock on the sea-shore near Dunolly Castle, to which Fingal is said to have tied up Bran during his own fight with a chief of the 'black Danes.' 'White-breasted Bran' was the best of the 'nine great dogs' and the 'nine smaller game-starting dogs' which always accompanied Fingal on his hunting expeditions. The 'surly strength of Luath'—another of Fingal's dogs—is duly celebrated in Gaelic tradition, but he was not so perfect or graceful as Bran :

'With his hind-leg like a hook or bent bow,  
His breast like that of a garron (hunting pony),  
His ear like a leaf,'—

a description which raises before us the image of a dear old friend, whose unblemished descent might have entitled him to an Augsбург canonry or an All Souls fellowship; and who, for anything we can tell, is now luxuriating in a canine Elysium with Bran himself, and Luath, and Maida. Light lie the earth above thee, and sweet fall the sunshine through the larches on thy grave, Oscar, 'fleet foot in the correi!'

The final disappearance of Bran from this earthly stage is surrounded with at least as great mystery as that of Cavall. An Irish legend—for Bran, like the rest of the Fingalians, belongs as much to Ireland as to Scotland—asserts that, having chased a snow-white hart for many hours, Bran sprang after it into a small lake in the county Clare. The deer vanished on touching the water. A beautiful lady appeared in its stead, laid her hand on the dog's head and submerged him for ever. The cliff from which he sprang is still called 'Craig-a-Bran,' and the district 'Tiarnach Bran'—the lordship of Bran.\* On the other hand, 'Cairn Bran' is pointed out

\* *Choice Notes from Notes and Queries—Folk-lore*, p. 103. 'Legends of the County Clare.'



in Glen Loth in Sutherlandshire ; and the Highland tradition bears that he died and was buried there after a severe fight with Thorp, the dog of a Sutherland chief, whose heart Fingal himself tore out in revenge.\* Of this legend, however, there is a very curious Irish version, which runs as follows : During the struggle between the Irish Fingalians and the host of 'Lochlyn,' a battle on one occasion continued so long, and the combatants were so nearly equal, that both sides at last agreed to abide by the issue of a fight between Bran and a famous 'cir dubh,' or black hound, belonging to the king of the Northmen. The name of this hound, in accordance with an old northern belief, which reappears in many different shapes, was carefully concealed, and until it should be discovered he was destined to remain invincible. The dogs fought on the top of a great rock in Connaught till they tore the very stone under their feet into powdery fragments, and trampled it again so hard that it became rock once more. The fight had lasted for some hours, and the 'cir dubh' had nearly gained the victory, when Bald-headed Conal, who alone of all the Fingalians knew the secret of the black dog's strength, turning his face eastward and biting his thumb (a ceremony which he would but rarely perform, but which endowed him with the gift of divination), made a sudden exclamation of encouragement to Bran, the first word of which was the black hound's name, who at once lost his strength and his victory.†

That the Northern deerhound—and most of all that variety

\* Scrope's *Deerstalking*.

† A curious example of the superstition which forbade the naming of a combatant during the fight occurs in 'Ribolt and Guldberg,' the Danish duplicate or original of the fine old Scottish ballad of the 'Douglas Tragedy.' Guldberg is cautioned not to name her lover while he is struggling with her father and her brothers. She does so however ; and at that moment Ribolt receives his death-wound. The caution has dropped out of the Scottish ballad ; but it is worth noticing that the hero's death-wound is received to all appearance

which seems to have attained its greatest perfection in Ireland and Scotland—was especially valued by the Vikings, and that a more than ordinary sagacity was attributed to it, appears from numerous passages in the Sagas—those picturesque narratives which enable us to realize with such minute accuracy the wild life of the early Icelandic colonists in the tenth and eleventh centuries. In them the ‘Irish’ hound, as he is usually called, appears as the companion of the Olafs, and Einars, and Kiartans, in their ‘hofs’ at the head of the rocky fiord or among the desolate inland mosses—sometimes even on the decks of their ‘sea-dragons’—just as we have seen him in close attendance on the great heroes of Celtic tradition :—

“I will give thee,” said Olaf Paa (the peacock) to Gunnar, whose story is recorded in the saga of Nial’s Burning, “three things : a golden bracelet ; a kirtle which belonged to Myrkiartan, King of Ireland ; and a dog which I got in the same country. He is huge of limb, and for a follower equal to an able man. Moreover, he hath man’s wit, and will bark at thine enemies, but never at thy friends. And he will see by each man’s face whether he be ill or well disposed toward thee. And he will lay down his life for thee. Samr is his name.” Then he said to the hound, “From this day follow thou Gunnar, and help him what thou canst.” So the hound went to Gunnar, and lay down at his feet, and fawned upon him.’

Samr could not prevent the murder of Gunnar ; but when Gizur attacked his master at Hlidarend, the dog did his best. Gizur and his party advanced along a beaten way on the top of the fence that surrounded the ‘town,’—the true old Northern

at the same instant as in the Danish version, immediately after Lady Margaret has called on him by name to ‘hold his hand’ :—

‘She held his steed in her milk-white hand,  
And never shed one tear  
Until that she saw her seven brethren fa’,  
And her father hard fighting, who loved her so dear.  
“O hold your hand, Lord William,” she said,  
“For your strokes they are wondrous sair :  
True lovers I can get many a ane,  
But a father I can never get mair.”’



name for the house with its attendant outbuildings and enclosures. There they halted ; and Thorkel the bond went nearer to the house. The dog lay watching on the low roof ; 'and,' continues the narrative, 'it chanced that he and Thorkel jumped at the same moment into the court in front. Instantly he flew at Thorkel, seized him, and so tore him that he died. But Onund of Trollaskog smote Samr on the head with his axe, so that it pierced the brain ; and the dog, with a great and wonderful cry, fell dead on the ground.'

The touches which show us Samr are but few ; yet he was evidently a worthy companion of Gunnar, himself one of the best among the rough old Icelanders, and we are sorry for that axe-stroke of Onund's. As worthy a hound as Samr was Vigr or Viki, the dog of Olaf Tryggvi's son, that grim Norwegian king, who first attempted to introduce Christianity at the point of the sword among the bonders of the seaboard and uplands. The Scalds and the compilers of Olaf's saga have invested his last battle with something of the same mysterious character which belongs to the fatal fight of King Arthur at Camlan. Olaf, so went the common belief, did not fall during the battle, but was conveyed away in the midst of the strife to some unknown region, whence, like the British King, he is to return in the hour of his country's greatest need. Throughout the battle, Vigr, a hound which Olaf had carried off whilst pillaging on the coast of Ireland, had been lying under the great mast in front of the ship, in the place always assigned to the chief fighters. After Olaf's disappearance, Einar Thambaskelfir, the King's principal 'hirdman,' or follower, going up to the dog, exclaimed, 'O Vigr, we have lost your master !' and Vigr, springing up as if seized with sudden grief, leapt overboard and swam to land. There, says the saga, he crouched himself on the top of a green hillock that overlooked the bay ; refusing to eat, although food was brought to him in plenty, and although he drove away from it other dogs and

birds of prey ; and there, at last, voluntarily starved to death, Vigr's limbs stiffened into their last repose. He had been the constant companion of Olaf ever since he had been carried off from the Irish coast ; and on one occasion had the honour of steering the King's ' Dragon,' the long ship, with its rude carvings and lines of gold and azure, in which Olaf threaded the deep, gloomy fiords, and narrow passages between the islands. Olaf was sailing home to Nidaros, after destroying the statue of Freyr, and asked Thorarinn the Iclander to steer for him ; but Thorarinn declared that Vigr could steer better, so the King, holding Vigr's paws, helped him to manage the rudder ; and the ' Dragon ' got safely home.

Samr and Vigr are but ordinary hounds after all, compared with the wonderful dog Sauer, made, says old Snorro, King of Drontheim, by Eystein of the Uplands. ' He was gifted with three men's wisdom ; and when he barked, he spoke one word and barked two. A collar and chain of gold and silver were made for him ; and his courtiers carried him in their hands when the weather or ways were foul.' Whether Sauer—who in spite of his attentive courtiers was at last torn to pieces by wolves—belonged to the great Northern hounds, or, as seems more probable, shared the niceness and the refinement of the Gallic Fretillons and Tontons, must remain uncertain ; nor do we see our way much more clearly toward an elucidation of the important questions, how far he was connected with the ' three-footed dog of Norroway,' of whom mention is made in the ' Complaynt of Scotland ' ; and how far he was entitled to call cousin with the royal dog of the Ethiopian Ptoembarii, whose voice and action were carefully interpreted by a select body of priests. Sauer, however, it is sufficiently clear, was no better than a heathen hound ; and he leads us, appropriately enough, into the company of those ' dogs of darkness ' which figure so extensively in mediæval folk-lore and tradition.

A trace of ancient heathendom may, perhaps, be recognised in certain mystic animals which figure in romance ; such as the black dog with red ears which, according to the Breton ballad, always accompanied the enchanter Merlin ; and the wonderful ‘ whelp ’ which King Triamour of Wales bestowed upon Sir Tristrem :—

‘ What colour he was wrought  
Now I shall you shewe,  
Silke n’as none so soft,  
He was red, green, and blewe ;  
They that him saw oft,  
Of him had game and glewe.  
Y wis ;  
His name was Peticrewe.’

But relics of the older world are far more frequent in local legend and superstitions ; and just as, after the introduction of Christianity, the ancient divinities, instead of passing away altogether, were only changed in the popular belief into powerful demons, so all that had been in any way connected with them partook to a great extent of the darker attributes with which they were now invested. Hence the dog of mediæval folk-lore is for the most part a very sad dog indeed. In the earlier mythologies his watchfulness and his instinct of chase had been duly represented, and had raised him to a distinguished place. He is now directly associated with the under-world, of which indeed he still occasionally appears as the guardian. According to Synesius, bishop of Ptolem in the early part of the fifth century, Cerberus continued his functions as watch-dog at the portals of hell itself ; and Dante represents ‘ Cerbero, il gran vermo ’—so called perhaps from the dragon’s tail which terminated his body—as guarding and tormenting the souls at the entrance of the third ‘cerchio.’ In Northern Europe, however, it is of course the old creeds of the Northmen and the Celts which have left their traces in the popular folk-lore : and Grimm has pointed out that in the first of these the wolf not unfrequently takes



the place which is elsewhere assigned to the dog. A brace of wolves, Geri and Freki, stood beside Odin's throne in Asgard ; but the all-wise, white-bearded Odin has long since sunk into a malevolent fiend ; and when he now appears to the benighted wanderer over the heaths of Sweden, he is attended, not by wolves, but by a leash of black, fire-breathing hounds. A whole pack of such hell-hounds are led on by their dark 'master'—a tall figure with a hunting pole—over the wastes of Dartmoor ; where it is possible that the traditions of Saxon heathendom have become mingled to some extent with those of the Celts. At all events, the 'wish hounds,' as they are called in Devonshire, resemble in almost every particular certain 'spiritual hunting dogs' which are frequently heard and seen in the Principality ; and of which a very curious account was published, toward the end of the last century, among other 'relations of apparitions,' by 'the late Rev. Edmund Jones, of the Tranch, in Monmouthshire.' Mr. Jones, who implicitly believes the wonders he describes, tells us that, 'before the light of the Gospel prevailed, there were in Carmarthenshire and elsewhere often heard before burials, what by some were called *Cwn Annwn* (dogs of hell) ; by others *Cwn bendith eu Mamau* (dogs of the fairies) ; and by some *Cwn wybir* (sky dogs). The nearer they were to man the less their voice was—like that of small beetles (beagles?) ; and the farther, the louder ; and sometimes like the voice of a great hound sounding among them, like that of a bloodhound,—a deep hollow voice.' Their hunt was frequently in the air—hence their name of 'sky dogs': and, says Mr. Jones, 'I have heard say that these spiritual hunting dogs have been heard to pass by the eaves of several houses before the death of some one in the family.' 'An acquaintance of mine,' he continues, 'a man perfectly firm to tell the truth, being out at night, heard a hunting in the air, and as if they overtook something which they hunted after, and, being overtaken, made

a miserable cry amongst them, and seemed to escape; but, overtaken again, made the same dismal cry; and again escaped, and followed after till out of hearing.' In the air the Cwn wybir seems to have been invisible; but when on 'middle earth,' either singly or in packs, they could make themselves seen as well as heard,—witness the following choice stories from Mr. Jones's spiritual portfolio :—

'Mr. D. W., of Pembrokeshire, a religious man, and far from fear and superstition, gave me the following account :—That as he was travelling by himself through a field called the Cot-moor, where two stones are set up, called the "Devil's Nags," at some distance from each other, where evil spirits are said to haunt and trouble passengers, he was thrown over the hedge, and was never well afterwards. Mr. W. went with a strong fighting mastiff dog with him; but suddenly he saw another mastiff dog coming towards him. He thought to set his own dog at it; but his dog seemed to be much frightened, and would not go near it. Mr. W. then stooped down to take up a stone, thinking to throw at it; but suddenly there came a fire round it, so that he could perceive it had a white tail, and a white snip down his nose, and saw his teeth grinning at him. He then knew it was one of the infernal dogs of hell; one of those kind of dogs against which David prayeth in Ps. xxii. 20, "Deliver my soul from the power of the dog."

'As R. A. was going to Laugharn town one evening on some business, it being late, her mother dissuaded her from going, telling her it was late, and that she would be benighted, likely she might be terrified by an apparition, which was both seen and heard by many, and by her father among others, at a place called Pant-y-Madog, which was a pit by the side of the lane leading to Laugharn. On coming back before night (though it was rather dark), she passed by the place, but not without thinking of the apparition. But being a little beyond this pit, in a field where there was a little rill of water, and just going to pass it, having one foot stretched over it, and looking before her, she saw something like a great dog (one of the dogs of hell) coming towards her. Being within four or five yards of her, it stopped, sat down, and set up such a scream, so horrible, so loud, and so strong, that she thought the earth moved under her; with which she fainted, and fell down. She did not awake and go to the next house, which was but the length of one field from the place, until about midnight; having one foot wet in the rill of water which she was going to pass when she saw the apparition.'

To the famous superstition of the wild hunter and his train—to which both the Cwn Annwn and the wish-hounds belong—

which is found in different forms throughout Europe, and which is certainly a relic of the older heathendom—a darker character was, no doubt, given by the monastic imagination which presided over the growth of so much mediæval folklore. When the hermit retired to his solitary cell, ‘in desertis,’ ‘in eremis,’ high up among the boulders of the mountain side, in the depths of the pathless forest, or among the ivy-grown ruins of some Roman town or tower long desolate and abandoned, he carried with him a horror of the world he had left behind; all the ordinary pleasures and pursuits of which were, in his eyes, tainted by the spirit of the ‘enemy.’ In his remote solitude, and under the influence of all the strange and mysterious sounds of the forest and the mountain, his mind would naturally recur to the wild legends which had been familiar to his childhood; and the chase, the grand recreation of the feudal baron, would thus become connected with those older beliefs that filled the woods with unearthly terror—the yelling of hounds, the clattering of horse-hoofs, the howls and cries of the ‘wild hunt of Odin,’ as, among shattered limbs and shivering branches, it swept onward through the storm. The ‘Maisne Hellequin,’ a remarkable form of the wild hunter’s legend, common to the great woods of Northern France and Alsace, was evidently the result of some such union of the popular creed with a true monk’s hatred of the wild life and recreations of the world he had abandoned. The ‘maisne’ or ‘household’ of the evil knight Hellequin was a great company of knights and barons, whose number was constantly on the increase, and who were condemned, as the punishment of ill deeds done in the body, to wander perpetually through forests and solitary places until Doomsday. Here they were frequently encountered, following the chase as when alive; but their horses and their dogs were demons in animal form, and the most wicked among them was compelled to take the place of the hunted

animal. They hunted, too, in the armour they had worn in life ; but helmet, sword, and hauberk had all become of such intolerable weight that no ordinary mortal could so much as lift them. Their punishment was a very fitting one, thought the fierce old Jesuit Delrio ; and the words of the prophet apply to it—‘Juxta illud propheticum—“descenderunt in infernum cum armis suis.”’ (Ezech.) ‘They went down into the grave with their weapons.’

The dog of the Maisne Hellequin has sunk into an actual demon. His form is indeed constantly assumed by the evil spirits which figure in monastic legends, as well as by the familiar imps of witch and wizard ; and there is more than one curious story in which a troublesome ‘revenant,’ whose nature and intentions were apparently none of the best, is transformed into a hound, and in that shape compelled to undertake some task of endless labour, by which, as is well known to all students of the supernatural, a ghost may be laid as effectually as if he had been transported to the depths of the Red Sea. But we are detaining our readers in no very good company, although we trust that, like ourselves, they will be inclined to protest against this unworthy treatment of our old favourites. At all events, they will not refuse to join in the regrets of Cuddy, one of the rustics in Ford’s gloomy play of the ‘Witch of Edmonton,’ who thus apostrophizes the ‘familiar’ of Mother Demdike. ‘Tom,’ the familiar, is himself by no means a dumb dog :—

‘*Cuddy.* Certainly, Tom, I begin to pity thee.

*Dog.* Pity me ? For what ?

*Cuddy.* Were it not possible for thee to become an honest dog yet ? ‘Tis a base life that you lead, Tom ; to serve witches—to kill innocent children—to kill harmless cattle—to destroy corn, fruit, and so forth. ‘Twere better yet to be a butcher, and kill for yourself.’

‘Every black must have its white,’ however. All dogs were not fiends. For if there were solitary monks and hermits who looked on the chase as a thing of evil, and helped to fling

an ominous shadow over the hounds that led it, there was many a bishop and lordly abbot who loved well 'to see his hawk fly and his greyhound run,' and who could appreciate their noble qualities as well as Sir Tristrem himself. Accordingly, whatever may have been the case with the dogs of the under-world, such ordinary mortal hounds as figure in mediæval history and romance lay by no means under the ban of the church or its ministers. They rejoiced, indeed, like their masters, in the powerful protection of St. Eustace or St. Hubert; unless they happened to be of that white race which was dedicated to St. Roche, great numbers of which were solemnly blessed before his altar on the day of his festival.

Both St. Eustace and St. Hubert were famous hunters. Both were miraculously converted by snow-white stags, which they followed far into the depths of the forest, and which, suddenly turning on their pursuers, displayed the crucifix between their antlers. In Southern Europe St. Eustace is the great patron of the chase. In the North it is St. Hubert who presides, not only over the chase, but over the more important guilds of archers and crossbow-men. The wide extent of his ancient reputation is evident from the number of churches in which the story of his conversion is told in wall-painting, in wood-carving, or in stained glass; but it was his own shrine, in the midst of the beech-woods of the Ardennes, that was the great object of reverence with every true servant of St. Hubert. The Benedictine abbey which contained it was founded on the very spot where the stag had halted, and on which the saint had passed seven years in the profoundest solitude. At the expiration of that time he went to Rome, where he was consecrated by Pope Sergius I. to the vacant bishopric of Maestricht; and it was during this ceremony that the famous stole, still one of the great treasures of the church of St. Hubert, was brought through the air to the Pope by the hands of an angel. St. Hubert



removed the seat of his bishopric to Liège, and is said to have laboured earnestly among the half-heathen population of Brabant and the Campine. St. Peter himself, according to the legend, bestowed on him a golden key, which conveyed with it unusual power over evil and unclean spirits ; a power which was proved by St. Hubert's cure of a madman who had entered a church, and whom he sent, calm and in his right mind, to recall the flying congregation. It was from this especial power, and from St. Hubert's former connection with the chase, that his aid came to be invoked, as it still is, in all cases of canine madness.

The death of St. Hubert is said to have occurred (the date is more than doubtful) in the year 727. Nearly a century afterwards, his remains, which had been duly enshrined, were removed, by permission of Walrand, Bishop of Liège, to the house of Benedictines which had long before been founded on the place of his penitence, which had fallen into ruin, and which was now solemnly restored. With the possession of the relics of the hunter-saint the house assumed his name, and the Abbey of St. Hubert became one of the most famous places of pilgrimage throughout the North of France and over all the great forest districts watered by the Meuse and the Moselle.\*

\* Some relics of St. Hubert, said to have been removed from his shrine at the time of its translation from Liège, form the chief treasure of the church of Limé, not far from Soissons. Neither man nor beast, says the local tradition, has ever been attacked by 'rage' (hydrophobia) within the limits of the Commune. A grand pilgrimage is made to the church of Limé on the 2nd of November ; when the following rhyme—half charm, half prayer—is recited :—

'Saint Hubert glorieux,  
Dieu me soit amoureux ;  
Trois choses me défend :  
De la nuit du serpent ;  
Mauvais loup, mauvais chien,  
Mauvaises bêtes enragées  
Ne puissent m'approcher,  
Me voir, ne me toucher,  
Non plus qu'étoile au ciel.'

The festival of St. Hubert is the 2nd of November, and it is on that day that the stranger who wishes to see his church at its best, or to moralise, as befits every traveller 'now he is in Arden,' upon the sundry changes of the world, should find his way over the wide-spreading heath toward the towers of his ancient monastery. The powerful Lord Abbot, whose feudal rights extended over all the surrounding country, and who ranked as first peer of the Duchy of Bouillon, has, indeed, disappeared, and what remains of his abbey has become the chief prison for the province of Luxembourg; but on the festival of the saint the church is still thronged by crowds of pilgrims who assemble from all parts to obtain a blessing on themselves and on their dogs, and to receive the small cakes of bread which, blessed on the altars of St. Hubert or St. Roche, and duly distributed among the hounds, are believed to be effectual for averting canine madness from the kennel during the ensuing year. The tomb or shrine of St. Hubert himself is in the crypt of the church, and his body, according to the popular belief, not only remains perfect within it, but his beard and his nails still grow, like those of the Emperor Barbarossa in the well-known legend. The miraculous stole of white silk, with rich 'orphrays,' is said to have been taken from the saint's body when his shrine was opened on its removal to the abbey in the ninth century. It now reposes on the high altar of the upper church, and, in spite of the constant withdrawal of portions of its fabric, is believed to remain entirely perfect and undiminished. It is the efficacy of this stole which is chiefly relied upon by persons who have either reason to fear an access of hydrophobia, or are actually suffering from it.

Such a patient proceeds with as little delay as possible to

The windows of the neighbouring church of Ferté-Milon are filled with very fine stained glass of the Renaissance period, representing the legend of St. Hubert.



the Abbey-church, where, in the midst of a solemn service, a slight incision is made in his forehead, into which are laid one or two threads of the miraculous stole. The head is then tightly bandaged, in which condition it must remain until the close of the 'neuvaine,' or nine days of religious observance, which are at once commenced. On each of these days the patient must confess and communicate. He may eat pork, fish, but only such as have scales—herring or carp, for example—hard eggs, and bread ; but whatever he eats must be cold. His drink must be pure water, or wine and water. The cup or glass he uses must be set aside for himself; and he must not on any account stoop to drink at springs or rivers. The sheets of his bed must be exquisitely white and clean. He must not comb his hair for a period of forty days, counting from the beginning of the 'neuvaine.' On the tenth day after the incision the bandage round the head is carefully removed by a priest, who must burn it, and throw the ashes into the piscina of the sacristy. The person who recovers after this treatment has, it is asserted, the power of arresting the progress of the disorder in others, and of granting them 'delays' until they are themselves enabled to reach the shrine of St. Hubert. In accordance with an old and curious belief, it was also said that the descendants of St. Hubert had the power of at once healing all persons suffering from canine madness by a simple imposition of hands. In 1649 a certain George Hubert, attached to the household of Louis XIV., received letters patent authorising him, 'de part le Roi,' to perform in this manner whatever cures lay in his power ; and it is said that more than one family in our own country, asserting its descent from the Saint of the Ardennes, still lays claim to some such privilege.\*

\* The descendants of St. Paul and of St. Catherine were said to be distinguished by similar powers. 'Many used to boast,' says Reginald Scot, 'that they are of St. Paul's race and kindred, showing upon their bodies the prints of serpents, which, as the papists affirm, were

It is not, perhaps, impossible that in some old-fashioned village church in Luxembourg or among the Vosges a true mass of St. Hubert—at which the keepers and foresters attended with their hounds, and blew the ‘fanfare de St. Hubert’ on their hunting-horns at the moment of consecration—might still be heard on his fête-day. We doubt, however, if one of the famous hounds—

‘The dogs of black St. Hubert’s breed,  
Unmatched for courage, strength, and speed,’

could now be anywhere discovered. All hunting dogs were under St. Hubert’s protection : but the abbots watched with especial care over a breed of hounds which, according to the tradition, were descended from the dogs who had followed the saint himself on the day of his mysterious conversion. Thoroughbred hounds of this race were jet black—‘mighty of body, with legges somewhat low and short’—bloodhounds rather than greyhounds. They were in great request throughout France and the Low Countries. The Dukes of Burgundy ranked them among the chief treasures of their enormous hunting establishments ; and three couples of them, together with half a dozen falcons from their eyries on the Meuse, were annually sent by the abbots of St. Hubert as a present to the French monarchs. A race of pure white dogs, possessing the same characteristics, was originally dedicated to St. Roche ; upon whose altars a white hound, holding in its mouth the cake which, like that of St. Hubert, was thought to avert madness from the kennel, is frequently sculptured. This breed is said to have been brought from the East. It soon became confused, however, with the older race ; incident to all them of St. Paul’s stock. Marry, they say withal, that all his kinsfolks can handle serpents or any poison without danger.’ Others had a Catherine-wheel on their bodies, ‘and say they are kin to St. Catherine ; they could carry coals in their hands, dip their heads into scalding liquor, and go into ovens.’—*Discovery of Witchcraft*, book xiii. chap. xv.

and both black and white hounds were called indifferently 'chiens de St. Hubert.' It is 'Souillart le Blond'—a white dog of this breed, from whose epitaph we learn its many virtues. Souillart, who in life had been attached to the French court, was a dog of letters. 'Dits' and 'Mémoires,' unhappily no longer existing, are attributed to him, and were perhaps as authentic as one-half of the 'Mémoires pour servir' with which we have been so liberally supplied by our lively neighbours. His epitaph, written by himself, survives; and in spite of the distrust with which such things are naturally regarded, we may venture to believe that this one does not lie:—

'Je suys Souillart le Blond, et le beau chien courant,  
De mon temps le millez, et le mieulx pour chassant ;  
Du bon chien Saint Hubert, qui Souillart avait nom  
Fuz fils et héritier, qui eult si grand renom.

\* \* \* \* \*

J'ai creu, craint, et aymé sur tous aultres mon maistre  
Autant que fist onc chien n'est possible d'estre.  
Maintz plaisirs lui ay faictz en plusieurs grands deffaulx  
Où il c'estait trouvé par pluyes et par grand chaulx.  
Droit chien bault ay esté de ceulx que loe Phebus,  
Et croy qu'après ma mort il n'en demeurera nulz  
S'il n'est de mes enfans, dont j'ay eu vingt et deux,  
Qui par toutes forestz prenaient les cerfs tous seulz.'

The admirers of the 'noble science' are bound, at all events, to listen respectfully to the catalogue of the perfections of this 'beau chien courant.' There is reason to believe that the existing race of fox-hounds is derived from a cross between the white dogs of St. Hubert (which, by the way, were nearly identical with the old English 'talbots') and an Italian 'brachet,' the offspring of which, called 'chiens greffiers,' were especial favourites of Louis XII., and 'united all the good qualities of the other running dogs, without their defects.'\*

The dogs which figure in mediæval romance are, for

\* Col. C. Hamilton Smith, 'Hist. of Dogs,' vol. ii. p. 111.

the most part, hounds of some description. Such was Hodain, whose name, although the romance to which he belongs is beyond all doubt the property of the 'old gentil Bretons,' seems to be mysteriously related to that of the great Teutonic deity. Whilst passing over the sea from Ireland with Sir Tristrem and la belle Ysonde, Hodain licked the cup which had contained the 'drink of might' by which the lovers were so unhappily united. He shared the effects of the potion, and attached himself to the fortunes of the pair, for whose sake he busied himself, together with Peticru, the wonderful parti-coloured 'whelp,' which Tristrem sent from Wales to Ysonde, in pulling down many a noble stag, when the lovers, in their cavern in the forest—

'hadde no wines wat,  
No ale that was old,  
Nor no good meat they ate :'

a statement from which we may conclude that the fair queen of Cornwall was scarcely so successful a cook as Hodain was a provider. The hound's fidelity and attachment is conspicuous throughout the romance. When Tristrem arrived at the castle of Tintagel disguised as a fool, with his hair cropped and his face blackened, Hodain recognised and fawned upon him, whilst Ysonde herself was more than doubtful; and when the bodies of the unhappy lovers were brought to Cornwall to be buried, Hodain left the wood, without turning aside to chase the stags with which it abounded, and ran straight to the chapel, into which he was admitted by Pernus, the squire of Tristrem, who watched his corpse. 'Illec,' in the words of the prose romance, 'demeurent Pernus et Heudene sans boire et sans manger; et quant ils avoyent fait leur dueil sur Tristan, ilz alloyent sur la Royne Yseult.' Hodain and Peticru—

'Two houndes mirie made,  
Fairer might none be,'—

were figured, with 'sweet Ysonde' and other personages of the romance, on the dais of the stately hall which the giant Beliagog constructed for Sir Tristrem; and we may still admire their graceful forms on many of those delicately carved ivory caskets which once adorned the bower of some white-handed Yolande or Isabelle, and are now jealously preserved among the choicest treasures of the antiquary.

The special attachment of Hodain to Tristrem and Ysonde was the result of his having shared the 'drink of might' with them; but the loving devotion of a hound to his master—itself one of the most human of his qualities, and that from which much of his noblest nature is developed—has been duly honoured by the 'makers' of romance. The well-known story of the dog of Montargis seems to belong to the stock of primitive Aryan tradition. In France, according to Mr. Dasent, it first occurs as told of Sibylla, a fabulous wife of Charlemagne; but, he adds, 'it is at any rate as old as the time of Plutarch, who relates it as an anecdote of canine sagacity in the days of Pyrrhus.'\* A dog that revenges his master appears in Hesiod; and it is not impossible that a still more primitive version may one day be discovered, as in the case of Gelert, among the stores of Oriental learning. Meanwhile the story, in different forms, may be traced throughout mediæval and later romance—the last and best appropriation of it having been that made by Sir Walter in the 'Talisman.' The hound himself is finely painted in the romance of 'Sir Triamour'—otherwise of little value. The king of Arragon, deceived by the false representations of his wicked steward, Marroek, banishes his queen, whom he intrusts to the guidance of an old knight named Sir Roger, the master of a greyhound of uncommon size and fierceness.

'So forth they went, in number three,  
Sir Roger, the queen, and the greyhound truly:  
Wo worth the wicked treason!'

\* Norse Popular Tales, Introd. p. xxx.

Marrock, with a company of eighteen associates, lays wait for the little party in a forest through which they were to pass. Here he attacks them; but the old knight, assisted by the hound, who 'full bitterly 'gan bite,' succeeds in killing fourteen of his assailants. Marrock, however, attacking him from behind, runs him through with his spear. During the confusion the queen escapes into the forest. Marrock searches for her in vain; but after he has retreated she reappears, finds her horse, and endeavours to persuade the hound to accompany her. He will not leave his master's body.

'She said, "Sir Roger, now thou art dead,  
 Who shall now the right way lead?  
 For thou may'st speak no more!"  
 Right on the ground there as he lay dead  
 She kissed him, ere she from him yede;  
 God wot, her heart was sore:  
 What for sorrow and for dread,  
 Fast away she 'gan her speed,  
 She wist not whither ne where.  
 The good greyhound for weal ne wo  
 Would not fro the knight go;  
 But lay and licked his wound.  
 He weened to have healed him again,  
 And thereto he did his pain;  
 Lo! such love is in a hound.'

He scrapes a pit for the dead body, covers it with moss and leaves, and guards it faithfully for seven long years.\* Every day he provides his own meat in the forest; but at last he has to wander farther for game, and at the close of the seventh year, whilst the king of Arragon is keeping high festival at Christmas, the greyhound suddenly appears in the hall,

\* Bochart asserts in the 'Hierozoicon' that a dog which had followed his master's bier to the grave three years before was still (1660) remaining on the spot. 'A similar case,' says Colonel Hamilton Smith, 'occurred in the last half-century, at Lisle; where the admiration of the neighbourhood caused a hut to be built for the dog, upon the grave of his master, and food to be brought him. The faithful creature resided on the spot for nine years, when he died,'—Vol. ii. p. 87.

makes the round of the tables, and retires. On his doing this a second time, the king recognises him, and orders that on his next visit he should be carefully watched and followed. The dog returns on the third day of the festival. The traitor Marrock is in the hall, and the greyhound, springing on the murderer of his master—

‘Toke the steward by the throat,  
And asunder he it bote ;  
But then he would not bide :  
Forth to the grave he ran,  
There followed him many a man,  
Some on horse and some beside.  
And when he came where his master was,  
He laid him down upon the grass,  
And barked at the men again.’

The body is, of course, sought for and found. It is buried with due solemnity, and the faithful dog soon afterwards expires on the tomb which is raised over it. The body of the steward Marrock, after being dragged through the town, is hanged on a gibbet. For the rest of the story—how the queen was restored to her husband, and how her son Sir Triamour became the preserver of his father’s life and kingdom—the reader may be referred to the romance itself, an abstract of which will be found in the collection of George Ellis.\*

We regret much that the romance-writer has not supplied us with the name of Sir Roger’s greyhound; and this the more, because we fancy we have discovered a connection between this traditional dog, who revenges his master, and a good creature whose auspicious name and whose patient endurance of many sufferings are well known to all. What is known of Mr. Punch’s dog?—

‘Tobias, tan jocoso, de los canes grande can!’

\* It has been printed at full length for the Percy Society, ed. Halliwell, 1846.



What is his history? Who were his ancestors? How came he by that elevation in the world which, however honourable, is attended by more than the usual amount of those pains and penalties which accompany greatness? Mr. Punch, as we know, came to us from Italy : but did not the Venetians themselves import him from the remoter shores of the Levant? At any rate, he is well known there. 'Karagoz' is the Turkish Punch. 'Hadji Aivad' is his more prudent companion, the 'Pantaloon' of the West. Under the Seljukid dynasty, whose capital was Broussa, Hadji Aivad is said to have been a messenger between that place and Mecca, where he was at last killed by the Arabs, who buried him at Honain. His dog remained with the murderers, and accompanied them to Damascus, where he used to place himself at the feet, and pull the clothes, of passengers in the streets and bazaars ; and having thus attracted their notice, he would fling himself upon the Arabs, barking and biting. The Arabs were consequently seized and searched. Hadji Aivad's effects were found among their baggage,—his sling, hatchet, bloody dress, and letter-bag ; and his murderers, thus convicted, 'were hanged in file on the place Sunanieh, whilst the dog placed himself under them, and breathed his life out.\*' The story is told by the gossiping Evliya Effendi, who adds that Hadji Aivad's ancestors were known by the name of Afeli-oghli, and famous for their great dogs—pointers (Zaghar), 'so that it is even now a proverb, "What ! are you yelling like Afeli-oghli's pointers?"' Is it not possible that the excellent Toby may be remotely descended from these famous dogs, one of whom, we are led to conclude, was the avenger of Hadji Aivad's murder?

In making this hound the constant companion and most faithful follower of the knight, the romance-writer, like a modern novelist, was only painting from the real life before

\* Travels of Evliya Effendi, vol. i. pt. 2, p. 243.

him. Indeed, so constant a recreation was the chase, that, even when passing from middle earth to the shadowy realms of faërie, the 'makers' could not conceive of the great personages of that under-world as otherwise employed or attended. When the Queen of Fairy came riding down by the Eildon tree, to meet True Thomas, a pair of brachet-hounds ran gallantly by her side; and when Sir Orpheo penetrated to the dismal land of Pluto, in search of his lost love, Dame Heurodys—

‘Then oft he saw, hym beside,  
In the hot summer-tide,  
The King of Fairy and his rout,  
Come to hunt all about,  
With shoutyng and horns blowyng,  
And houndys grete crying.’

The true knight, like Gaston de Foix, who named his best dogs after the heroes of romance—Brute, Tristan, Roland, and Hector of Troy—‘loved hounds of all beasts, both winter and summer;’ and his love was occasionally returned by a devotion as remarkable as any that is recorded in romance. Giraldus tells us of a greyhound (*leporarius*) which belonged to the Welsh chieftain, Owen ap Caradoc, and which received seven severe wounds from lances and arrows in defending his master.\* He was afterwards brought to the English King Henry II., and enjoyed, let us hope, more consideration and more honour for his noble daring than fell to the lot of his unhappy prince. The well-known story of the desertion of Richard II. by his dog Mathe, who, as Froissart asserts, during the King’s first interview with Bolingbroke at Flint, left his master, to whom he had hitherto been strongly attached, to fawn on and remain in the service of the usurper, should rather perhaps be regarded as a ‘sad story of the fate of kings’ than as an example of infidelity in the most constant

\* G. Cambrensis, *Itin. Camb.*, p. 842.

and devoted of animals. At any rate, half-blind, flea-bitten Argus, and King Roderick's Theron, may be set against the unfaithful Mathe, who seems to have been one of the great Irish deerhounds. There was an old belief that these dogs had the power of recognising persons of royal or noble birth, to whom, however fierce otherwise, they would submit themselves in all gentleness. Mathe was thus supposed to have acknowledged by his caresses the true heir to the crown in the King's 'fair cousin of Lancaster.' The story, however, belongs, in all probability, to that class of wide-spread early traditions of which Gelert and the dog of Montargis have already been quoted as examples. It is found elsewhere, and is told of other animals than dogs—among the rest, of the ermine, which became the emblem of Brittany, and which figures in the arms of its Dukes.\*

The famous dogs of the Knights of Rhodes, which could tell a Turk from a Christian by the smell, and treated him accordingly, were 'Anglici canes'—English mastiffs. The race seems to have been held in much honour in the south of Europe. They were said to be descended from the well-trained dogs of the knight who fought with and killed the great dragon of Rhodes,—a story which is familiar to us all from the poem of Schiller and the outline illustrations of Moritz Retsch. Is it a brace of these dogs whose portraits look out upon us from the picture of Veronese, thus 'copied' by Mr. Ruskin?—

'Two mighty brindled mastiffs ; and beyond them, darkness. You scarcely see them at first, against the gloomy green. No other sky for them, poor things ! They are grey themselves, spotted with black all over ; their multitudinous doggish vices may not be washed out of them, are ingrain of nature. Strong thewed and sinewed, however, no blame on them as far as bodily strength may reach ; their heads coal-black, with drooping ears and fierce eyes, bloodshot a little. Wildest of beasts, perhaps, they would have been by nature.

\* The story will be found in Dom Morice, *Histoire de Bretagne*.

But between them stands the spirit of their human Love, dove-winged and beautiful, the resistless Greek boy, golden quivered; his glowing breast and limbs the only light upon the sky—purple and pure. He has cast his chain about the dogs' necks, and holds it in his strong right hand, leaning proudly a little back from them. They will never break loose.\*

The bloodhound, however, was the great dog of the South. It was in especial favour with the Spaniards of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and its savage, almost untamable, nature rendered it a fitting companion for the iron troopers of Alva, or the merciless conquerors of the New World. Indeed, both in the Low Countries and on the coasts of Mexico and Peru, these dogs took an active share in their masters' proceedings. The name of that 'admirable dog' Bezerillo, 'muy excelente perro,' and that of Leoncillo, 'the little treasure,' and 'the little lion,' are recorded among those of the conquerors of Puerto Rico. They drew their rations regularly, like the soldiers; and many a wretched Indian must have been tracked by them through the dense forests and underwood. It was a bloodhound whose tomb Evelyn saw at the foot of a colossal Jupiter in the gardens of the Doria Palace at Genoa; 'for the care of which,' he tells us, 'one of this family received of the King of Spayne five hundred crownes a-year during the lifetime of that faithful animal.'† The race was carefully cherished in Spain; and, besides a large hound strongly resembling the Northern Danish dog, the ancestors of which were, it has been suggested, brought to Spain by the Goths, the bloodhound frequently appears on the grand canvases of Titian and Velasquez. These are the 'noble brown beasts,' some of which, in Mr. Ruskin's words, Velasquez has made as grand as his surly kings. 'The dogs of Velasquez,' he remarks elsewhere, 'are sterner and more threatening than those of Veronese; as are also his kings and admirals. This fierceness in the animal

\* *Modern Painters*, vol. v. p. 260.

† *Diary*, i. p. 131.

increases as the spiritual power of the artist declines.' No small allowance should be made, however, for the difference between the races—the bright, earnest Venetian and the far gloomier and more solemn Spaniard—chiefly represented by the two great painters. The savage cruelty which marred the faith of the latter is reflected in the bloodhound on whose head the gloved hand of his master so often rests in the stately portraits of Velasquez.

Of whatever race the artist may have thought fit to make the 'Domini canes,'—the black and white dogs which represented the faithful sons of St. Dominic in their black cowls and white scapulars,—there can be no doubt that a strong dash of the bloodhound ought properly to mingle with it. In one of the frescoes by Simone Memmi, which adorn the chapterhouse of Sta. Maria Novella at Florence, a whole pack of the Domini canes are represented as in the act of worrying a band of wolves, under which guise such pestilent heretics as Peter Waldo and his followers are shadowed forth. The title of the Lord's dogs, however, although at once suggested by the name of St. Dominic's order, had been appropriated long before the days of the 'frères.' 'Since,' replied the merchant Samo, who had become chief of the Slaves, to a messenger sent from King Dagobert, 'you call yourselves the servants of God, and us His dogs, recollect that what you do as profitless servants against His will, it may be given to us to avenge with bites.'\* But no Slavonic dog ever bit so sore as the parti-coloured hounds of the Inquisition. How far the Earl of Wiltshire's dog was influenced by a desire to avenge the Protestant wolves we will not venture to decide. A faint apology for his conduct—ininitely worse than that of Launce's Crab, when he thrust himself into the company of three or four gentleman-like dogs under the duke's table—is, we are shocked to write it, offered by Fuller ;

\* Aimoin, l. iv. c. 23.

who says, that when the English embassy reached Rome in 1530, 'they found the Pope in his grandetza proffering his toe to them, which none offered to kiss save the unmannerly spaniel (to say no worse of him) of the Earl of Wiltshire, whom the Jesuit (Father Floud) calls a Protestant dog for biting the Pope's toe ; but let him tell us what religion those dogs were of that ate up Jezebel the harlot.'\*

Dr. Stanley, who saw the descendants of these dogs prowling under the walls of Jezreel, will tell us that, whatever their religion may have been, they were certainly not spaniels. Greyhounds, spaniels, and hounds are classed by Sir Philip Sidney—the first, as 'the lords ;' the second, 'the gentlemen ;' and the last, 'the yeomen of dogges.'† The gentlemen, in King Charles's opinion, were the more courtly, though not for this reason the better, companions. 'Methinks,' writes Sir Philip Warwick, who was in attendance on the King at Newport, 'because it shows his disesteem of a common court vice, it is not unworthy the relating of him, that one evening, his dog scraping at his door, he commanded me to let in Gypsey, whereupon I took the boldness to say, "Sir, I perceive you love a greyhound better than you do a spaniel." "Yes," says he, "for they equally love their masters, and yet do not flatter them so much." ' ‡

However they may be classed, there is no doubt that dogs, like men, have their different ranks, nor that Fortune showers her gifts among them with just as uneven a hand as she uses when busying herself with their masters :—

'Some wake to the world's wine, honey, and corn,  
Whilast others, like Colchester natives, are born  
To its vinegar only, and pepper.'

During the middle ages the greyhounds, as the 'lords of dogges,' came in for such stars and blue ribbons as were to

\* *Church History*, b. v. sec. 2, § 18. ‡ *Mem. of Charles I.*, p. 365.

† *Arcadia*, book ii.

be enjoyed in the canine world. A certain breed of them had the privilege of appearing with their masters whenever they pleased in the presence of the Emperor Charles the Great. As a mark of this privilege, the hound's right paw was closely shaven; a less oppressive, if less useful, distinction than the richly damasked corselets and back-plates which were fastened about the best greyhounds when about to take part in the boar-hunt; 'to defend them from the violence of the swine's tusks,' says Cavendish, who saw them armed in this manner at Compiègne.\* The superb necklets of gold, set with pearls and rubies, which were constantly worn by such greyhounds of high degree as figure in the Welsh Mabinogion, —and before which honest Cæsar's

'Lockit, letter'd, braw brass collar,  
Which show'd him gentleman and scholar,'

fades into complete insignificance,—must partly perhaps, but only partly, be placed to the score of the romancer's imagination. Very rich ancient collars exist. Many of great splendour are figured in early illuminations; and some very curious ones may occasionally be seen on the dogs which lie at the feet of monumental effigies. The collars of those on the tomb of Bishop John of Sheppey in Rochester Cathedral are coloured vermillion, and small bells are hung from them at intervals. Thin circlets, possibly of gold, are about the necks of the greyhounds in the illuminations of the well-known MS. of Froissart (temp Ric. II.), in the British Museum: and they sometimes appear wrapped in long cloaks and housings of blue and scarlet, blazoned with lions and fleurs-de-lys; a magnificence which, however gratifying to canine vanity, must have been occasionally found as inconvenient as Miss Caroline's gauze hat and silk slippers, when,

\* Life of Wolsey, p. 527 (in Wordsworth's *Eccles. Biog.*). In the romance of 'Octavian Emperor' a lioness is thus armed, and fights by the side of Octavian in every battle.



as the story in the 'Looking Glass' used to tell us, she insisted, thus sumptuously attired, on joining the sports of her more sensible companions. We wonder whether vanity or discomfort was the prevailing sentiment in the mind of the dog who, not many years since, attended his mistress's funeral in a long black cloak—we believe, at Worcester:

If the canine mind be indeed open to a sentiment of vanity, it must occasionally be subjected to some very serious shocks. It can be no very pleasant thing for a dog of any delicacy of feeling to be reminded that the Latin prose of the unhappy candidate who fails in his matriculation trials at Exeter or Brasenose is just such as he might himself be expected to produce under similar circumstances: nor can he be much more gratified at finding his name bestowed on the scentless and unprized varieties of the rose and violet; unless indeed he remembers that the dog-rose was so called because it was anciently thought to be a preservative against hydrophobia, for both dogs and men; and unless, as may very likely be the case, he shares the taste of the old whipper-in, who regretted that his dogs had no longer a chance of discovering the true scent, 'now that they stinking violets were all in flower.' It may be doubted, moreover, whether his discovery of the fact that the vessel for holding the famous purple ink with which the Byzantine Emperors used to sign their names was shaped like a dog, and placed under the charge of a special officer, or even whether the recognition of his own form in the honoured salt-cellar which rose in the centre of the board, and which was frequently fashioned like a dog, would console a hound of sensitive mind, and of archæological tastes, for the degradation implied in the strange old penance known to antiquaries as 'canophoria,' and imposed in some parts of Europe on the knight who had been guilty of serious crime. The penance consisted in the condemned person's walking barefooted and bareheaded, and carrying a dog

across his shoulders, from the place where the crime had been committed, either across the border, into the adjoining 'county,' or to the great doors of the most important church or monastery in the district.\* The most frequent instances of this kind of punishment occur in the chronicles of Northern Europe; but it was by no means confined to the remoter shores of the Baltic; and if our canine friend should not chance to meet with it in his researches, he would certainly come across numberless records of the hanging of dogs side by side with human malefactors,—an insult which was in especial favour when an unfortunate Jew happened to be the victim. In short, notwithstanding the protection of St. Hubert and St. Roche, and in spite of all his sagacity and faithfulness, it is certain, as Mr. Dasent has remarked after Grimm, that 'something unclean and impure'—handed onward, no doubt, from the primitive Oriental feeling—was associated with the dog throughout the mediæval period, and still clings to him in popular tradition. His name is still as much a word of reproach as when it was bestowed on the excommunicated 'Cagots'—'Gothic dogs;' and his long wailing howl is just as ominous now as when, in the great session of the Council of Florence, at which Greeks and Latins met in the vain hope of permanently arranging their theological differences, the dog of the Emperor John Palæologus 'howled fiercely and lamentably' throughout his master's speech; foretoking the inutility of the Greek concessions, and the approaching conversion of St. Sophia into a Mahomedan mosque.

If our antiquarian friend belong to the nobler class—the true 'lords' of dogs—he will, no doubt, meet these discoveries

\* The earliest notices of this punishment occur in the Francic and Senevic laws,—a sufficient proof of its antiquity. The noble carried a dog; the serf or unfree a saddle. The Emperor Frederick Barbarossa compelled one of his most powerful counts, with ten of his companions, to walk thus in penance for a German mile, each of them carrying a dog on his shoulders.

with becoming dignity, and will pass them by with a brief reflection on human pride and ingratitude. But 'my lady's brach who lies by the fire'—

'the little dogs and all,  
Tray, Blanche, and Sweetheart,'

will be more disagreeably affected. These are the dogs on whom, as Mr. Ruskin tells us, Veronese and the rest of the Venetians are 'so hard ;' exemplifying, by their means, the lowest forms of really human feeling—such as 'conceit, gluttony, indolence, petulance.' The little 'curly, short-nosed, fringy-pawed things, which all Venetian ladies petted,' are thus introduced by Veronese in two of his greatest pictures—the 'Presentation of his own family to the Madonna,' at Dresden, and the 'Queen of Sheba before Solomon,' at Turin. In the first, the dog is the 'last link in the chain of lowering feeling' (the others running through Veronese's children, of different ages), and is walking away much offended ; not a little wondering, as Mr. Ruskin suggests, how the Madonna could possibly have got into the house. In the second picture, whilst the Queen is overcome with emotion, her dog 'is wholly unabashed by Solomon's presence or anybody else's, and stands with his fore-legs well apart, right in front of his mistress, thinking everybody has lost his wits, and barking violently at one of the attendants, who has set down a golden vase disrespectfully near him.\*' The 'fringy-paws,' according to Evelyn, were carefully bred for sale in most of the Italian monasteries ; and a Venetian contessa's father confessor, besides his spiritual consolation, could supply his patroness with the 'dearest little dog in the world,' and with the indispensable orange-flower water and 'cedrat,' between the preparation of which, and the breeding of lapdogs, the good fathers divided their

\* *Modern Painters*, vol. v. pp. 228-230.

attention. Many a fringy-paw found its way to England among other 'fashions of proud Italy,' which the Flanders galleys brought to Southampton on their homeward voyage; and it is against the devotion of the English ladies to these 'sybaritical puppies'—predecessors of the King Charleses and the Blenheims immortalised by Landseer—that Harrison lifts up his voice in the curious description of England prefixed to Holinshed's Chronicle:—

'They are little and prettie,' he says, 'proper and fine, and sought out far and neere to satisfie the nice delicacie of daintie dames; instruments of follie to plaie and dallie withall, in trifling away the treasure of time, to withdraw their minds from more commendable exercises . . . a sillie poore shift to shun their irksome idlenesse. These Sybariticall puppies, the smaller they be (and thereto if they have a hole in the forepart of their heads) the better they are accepted . . . as meet playfellows for minsing mistresses to bear in their bosomes, to keep company withall in their chambers, to succour with sleep in bed, to nourish with meat at boord, to lie in their laps and licke their lips as they lie (like young Dianaes) in their wagons and coches. And good reason it should be so; for coarsenesse with finenesse hath no fellowship; but featenesse with neatnesse hath neighbourhood enough.' \*

Neither Harrison nor Mr. Ruskin, however, was privileged to see so deeply into the matter as a certain monk of Bec, who, in a vision, beheld two ladies of his acquaintance undergoing much suffering in purgatory, the result, as they told him, of an 'immoderate love of little dogs' during their lifetime. According to this it must, we should fear, be faring badly with Justus Lipsius, the learned professor of Louvain, whose habit it was to preside at lecture attended by a whole tribe of similar pets. Indeed, such followers have their inconveniences even in this upper world. Grave suspicion was more than once awakened as to the exact nature of Lipsius' attendants; a suspicion which rose into certainty in the case of Cornelius Agrippa's little black dog 'Monsieur.'

The Venetian fringy-paws were only a variety of the dogs

\* *Description of England*, book ii. chap. 7.

of Malta—the most ancient lapdogs of the Western world—small, white, and silky; especial pets of the great Roman ladies. ‘When his favourite dog dies,’ writes Theophrastus, as an illustration of the character of the ‘Vain man,’ ‘he deposits the remains in a tomb, and erects a monument over the grave, with an inscription—“Offspring of the stock of Malta.”’ The ‘Vain man’ seems to have been rather anxious that the world should know of how valuable a dog he had been the possessor, than to have raised his monument from any great regret for the ‘Offspring of Malta.’ Every variety of motive indeed has led to the erection of canine monuments, from the Cynosema on the Thracian headland, to the ‘Imago Maidæ’ before the hall-door of Abbotsford; and we must leave it for some modern Theophrastus or La Bruyère to say how far human vanity is to be traced underlying or intermingling with them all. During the recent demolition of the old chapel at Exeter College, Oxford, a small brass was found with an inscription recording the loss of a favourite dog. This is probably the only instance of canine commemoration in such a place; unless we may regard as a similar record of affection the name ‘Tirri,’ inscribed below the dog of Dame Alicia Cassey on her brass (date 1400), in the very interesting church of Deerhurst in Gloucestershire. ‘Tirri’ (are we to recognise the modern ‘Tray’ in the word?) may have been a most virtuous and gifted animal, and may have rendered such inestimable services to his mistress as deserved an enduring record. Unhappily his name alone survives; whilst of another and more famous dog—who has also found a place on his master’s tomb—we have the record of the services without the name. It is impossible to determine how much, not his master alone, but all Europe, owed to the spaniel whose marble effigy lies crouched at the feet of William the Silent, the great founder of the Dutch Republic, on his tomb in the church at Delft. It was this dog which saved the

Prince's life by springing forward, barking, and scratching his master's face with his paws, when, in the night attack on the camp before Mons, a band of Spanish arquebusiers were on the point of entering the tent of William. His guards and himself were in profound sleep, and there was but just time for the Prince, after the spaniel had roused him, to mount a horse which was ready saddled, and make his escape through the darkness. His servants and attendants lost their lives. 'To his dying day,' Mr. Motley tells us, 'the Prince ever afterwards kept a spaniel of the same race in his bed-chamber.' We hope—but we are nowhere told—that the dog to whom 'free Friezeland' and the struggling Dutch provinces were so greatly indebted, managed to save his own life in the midst of the confusion.

Whoever desires to see what amount of honour may be rendered to the race by its more ardent admirers should visit the canine necropolis at Goodwood, where the sides of a deep hollow among the shrubberies are filled with tombs and tombstones, on which the names and merits of departed favourites are duly recorded. A walk through this final resting-place of virtue ought to be full of consolation for the most snappish of fringy-paws. The tombstones of about sixty dogs still remain, we believe, on the banks of a large pond near the grotto at Oatlands. They were placed there by the Duchess of York, who supplied their epitaphs, one of which runs as follows :—

'Pepper, near this silent grotto  
Thy fair virtues lie confest ;  
Fidelity thy constant motto :  
Warmth of friendship speaks the rest.'

This Pepper was, perhaps, a 'bonny terrier, and a fell chield at the vermin ;' but the patriarchal Pepper of Charlie's Hope, whose 'fair virtues' remain unrecorded on the banks of his native Liddel, would have passed by the tombstone

with a growl of gentle contempt. In fact, it is no easy matter to produce a good canine epitaph. One of the best we know—

‘Life to the last enjoyed, here Pompey lies,’—

was placed by Hogarth on the tomb of his wife’s dog, which still remains at the end of a filbert-walk in the garden of the house he occupied at Chiswick. Hogarth has appropriated the line from Churchill’s ‘Candidate’—no doubt far more truly applicable to Pompey than to its unfortunate inventor—which the poet chose for his own tombstone at Dover. It is curious enough that Pope was on the point of adopting the epitaph of an infinitely greater poet than Churchill for the tomb of his dog Bounce, who figures by the side of his master in Richardson’s portrait at Hagley. But Pope allowed himself to be persuaded that ‘O rare Bounce!’ would savour of disrespect to Ben Jonson. The inscription, however, would have been at least as appropriate in the garden of the Twickenham villa as it is in the abbey transept. Scarcely less briefly suggestive is Titania’s call, ‘Where’s Peas-blossom?’ which we once saw above the resting-place of an honest brown terrier, one of four brothers, named after the attendants of the fairy queen, just as ‘kind and courteous’ as those worthy gentlemen, and just as eager to ‘hop in the walks and gambol in the eyes’ of their mortal mistress.

But a dog may have greatness thrust upon him by other means than an epitaph. Hogarth has introduced his own dog Crab in his portrait, and by so doing has conferred immortality on a pug who, as far as his countenance goes, would certainly seem to have been something more than a namesake of Launce’s follower, ‘the sourest-natured dog that lives.’ Some dogs, too, rise in the world with their masters. During Rousseau’s Parisian celebrity, ‘his very dog,’ David Hume wrote to Blair, ‘which is no better than a collie, had a name and reputation.’ David, we hope, was not jealous of the collie,



as Goldsmith undoubtedly would have been. He might have remembered that a French literary lion has much in common with a fine lady, and that the Blenheim of a true 'belle of the ball-room' will certainly be distinguished for her sake :—

'And she was flattered, worshipped, bored ;  
 Her steps were watched ; her dress was noted ;  
 Her poodle dog was quite adored ;  
 Her sayings were extremely quoted.  
 She laughed—and all the world was glad  
 As if the taxes were abolished ;  
 She sighed—and every heart was sad  
 As if the Opera were demolished.'

Ariel himself undertook the charge of Shock on that day when black omens threatened the fate of Belinda ; and Shock in his turn lies embedded in the imperishable amber of Pope's verses. Even the ingratitude of a dog has occasionally brought about his commemoration. Thus pleasantly does M. Karr lament the desertion of his companion Schütz :—

'Et cependant c'était un heureux chien ! habitué du pâtissier Felix, maître dans la maison et au dehors, tellement que, quand nous sortions ensemble, chacun a un des bouts d'un cordon de soie, on prétendait qu'il me tenait en laisse. Tous mes amis étaient les siens. Gatayes l'appellait "mon cousin ;" Victor Bohain l'invitait à dîner à Palaiseau ; à Palaiseau, où était ce beau rosier sous lequel on se mettait à l'abri de soleil et de la pluie—ce beau rosier qui est mort l'année dernière. Semblable à un arbre dont les feuilles tombent, l'homme voit successivement mourir autour de lui tout ce qu'il aime, tout ce qui lui plaît. Chaque jour on lui envoyait des gateaux et des bonbons ; les plus jolis doigts blancs se mêlaient dans les soies noires de sa crinière. Allons, les chiens ne valent pas mieux que les hommes : Schütz est parti—Schütz ne m'aimait pas—il ira à deux cents lieues d'ici avec des gens qui ne demandent à un chien que d'être chien et féroce, et qui veulent être défendus par lui. C'était moi qui défendais Schütz, et j'ai une fois battu un charretier qui semblait vouloir lui donner un coup de fouet. Je garde son portrait et les coussins oranges sur lesquels il se couchait ; l'orange lui allait si bien !' \*

Schütz, it is clear, was a thorough Parisian, in spite of his

\* A. Karr, *Geneviève*, t. ii.

name. His Paris, however, is the Paris of the Boulevards and of the Café de l'Europe. He wants that air of the 'grand cour'—that soupçon of powder and patches—which lingers about Belinda's Shock or Horace Walpole's Patapan—

'so nice, whoever saw  
A pearly drop on his sofa?'—

or most of all about the charming Fretillon, the little dog of Madame d'Aulnoy's story, whose black eyes looked out from under his Louis Quaterze wig—who barked at the fishes as he took care of the Princess on the raft—and who, when all his dangers were over, would condescend to eat nothing but 'perdrix' for the rest of his life. Frederick of Prussia's Pompadour, who, as the great King declared, 'did not cost him half so much as that other Pompadour cost his brother of France,' must of course have been a true French poodle; and we fancy her long silken ears tied up with blue ribbons à la Sévigné. Let us hope that her morale was under better regulation than that of her too famous namesake, and that she resembled certain 'levrettes' celebrated by Balzac in one of his novels, 'dont les mœurs avaient quelque chose de la discretion Anglaise.'

Frederick the Great seems to have been as constantly attended by a tribe of little dogs as our own Charles II., who so much scandalised Mr. Pepys by talking to Nelly as she leant over her garden wall, whilst the King stood in the Pall-Mall below surrounded by his canine companions. The 'Mercurius Rusticus' for June, 1660, contains a curious advertisement for a 'smooth black dog,' 'his Majesty's own dog,' which, it has been suggested, may have come from the King's own hand.\* 'Whosoever findes him may acquaint any at Whitehall; for the dog was better known at court than those who stole him. Will they never leave robbing his Majesty? Must he not keep a dog? This dog's place,

\* *Quarterly Review*, No. 193.

though better than some imagine, is the only place which nobody offers to beg.' The dog, it is also said, 'doubtless was stolen, for it was not born nor bred in England, and would never forsake its master.' It may have been an old favourite of the King's at Breda or at Bruges. Something indeed of the laxity of canine manners which formerly prevailed throughout the Low Countries seems to have been imported into England, with the dogs themselves, by returning loyalty. In many a quaint old picture still to be seen in the Belgian churches, and recording some remarkable event or miraculous 'guerdon' of which they had been the scenes (there is a long series of such historical pictures—of no value as works of art, but otherwise full of interest—in one of the chapels of the cathedral at Bruges), dogs of all sorts and sizes mingle as familiarly with the congregation as if they held the doctrine of the Jesuit Albertini, that every animal has its guardian angel, and is interested in the most solemn offices of the altar.\* Judging from these pictures, however, the behaviour of the church-going dogs of old Flanders was anything but reverential. Some are quarrelling; others have brought a bone into the sacred building, and are growling over it; and it is only here and there that one is to be seen conducting himself with the grave propriety of a Highland sheep-dog, who generally accompanies his master to kirk, listens to all appearance with exemplary attention to the minister's 'sixthly,' and never once attempts to add the music of his howl to the psalmody. In the remoter parts of Scotland the dogs may have always made part of the congregation, as indeed they may have done in England in earlier and ruder times; but it is after the Restoration that they attract special attention, and that the 'dog-whipper,'—an officer still, we believe, attached to certain

\* Albertini's curious treatise, *De Angelo Custode*, was published in 1610.

churches—was called upon to operate most actively. That the canine intrusion lasted to the middle of the last century appears from a curious paper by Bonnel Thornton, in the 'Connoisseur' for October 8th, 1755 :—

'We may often see,' he writes, 'a footman following his lady to church with a large Common Prayer-book under one arm, and a snarling cur under the other. I have known a grave divine forced to stop short in the middle of a prayer, while the whole congregation has been raised from their knees to attend to the howling of a non-conforming pug ; and I once saw a tragedy monarch disturbed in his last moments, as he lay expiring on the carpet, by a discerning critic of King Charles's black breed, who jumped out of the stage box, and fastened upon the hero's periwig, brought it off in his mouth, and lodged it in his lady's lap.'

The 'discernment' of this cynical critic was exceeded, we think, by that of a Newfoundland dog belonging to Mr. Charles Kean ; who, during the performance of 'Richard III.' at Exeter, and whilst his master was engaged in the final combat on the field of Bosworth, rushed on the stage, set upon the unlucky Richmond, and without the slightest consideration for the text of Shakespeare, put him to a complete and ignominious flight.

We have more than once referred incidentally to the few dogs and 'doggish' allusions introduced in the plays of the great dramatist. Much indeed do we regret that they are so few ; for such a dog as Launce's Crab is as completely individualized as Launce himself, and stands out quite as clearly and distinctly from the crowd of his brethren. Among the many points of marked difference between the lighter literature of England and the Continent, the manner in which the dog is introduced as one of the minor 'dramatis personæ' is especially characteristic. Poodles and lapdogs, with an occasional 'levrette,' are almost the only representatives of the canine race which figure in the yellow-wrapped 'Romans' wherewith modern Paris is content to amuse herself ; nor is there much trace of a real appreciation of the more generov

kinds, at least, as friends and companions, in the whole range of French literature. We cannot even except Montaigne ; for although the garrulous old Gascon led a true 'vie de campagne' in his world-famous château, we cannot recall a single passage in the essays in which the canine virtues are so much as alluded to. Indeed, we cannot doubt that Montaigne did not admit even a dog to share the solitude of his turret library. Had he done so, we should certainly have been made acquainted with all its merits and peculiarities—with the shape of its tail and ears, and the exact number of spots on its back. On the other hand, there is scarcely one great English poet, from Chaucer to Scott, who does not, more or less directly, impress us with a conviction that he was a true lover of dogs. The country life of England—the fresh open air of its woods and downs—breathes throughout its literature. Who can doubt that Shakespeare was a sportsman? Many a time he may have roused the hart on Ingon Hill with such hounds as those of Duke Theseus of Athens—

'So flewed, so sanded, and their heads are hung  
With ears that sweep away the morning dew ;  
Crook-kneed, and dewlapped like Thessalian bulls :  
Slow in pursuit ; but matched in mouth like bells,  
Each under each . . .'

We may be very sure that more than one especial favourite—would we had their names to place in the most honoured niches of our canine gallery !—watched the steps of the poet with loving eyes as he paced the long garden terraces at New Place.

Something perhaps of the feeling which, according to Mr. Ruskin, led the great Venetian painters to pass by the nobler qualities of the dog in the presence of man—'subduing it, like an inferior light in presence of the sky'—may have prevented Shakespeare from giving us a more complete series of canine portraits. But if we have to content ourselves with

but few sketches from his master-hand, his great modern representative has raised the dog almost to the dignity of a principal personage. In the novels of Sir Walter's predecessors a dog appears now and then, and is sometimes, as in those of Fielding and Smollett, introduced happily enough. We do remember the troubles of Chowder and Mrs. Tabitha Bramble. But for the most part the canine portraits of these earlier masters are touched in but slightly, and are soon forgotten; whilst Ban and Buscar, who dashed the dew from the ladyfern by the side of Davie Gellatly; little Wasp, who, if he was not so 'weel entered wi' the rattons,' happily escaped the mutilations to which the race of Pepper and Mustard were liable; or Juno, that type of woman-kind, who ran off with Mr. Oldbuck's buttered toast, rise before the 'mind's eye' as distinctly as Waverley, or Henry Bertram, or the Antiquary, and at once recall the whole group of characters belonging to the story in which they figure. Every shade of canine feeling, every development of canine nature, may be studied in the pages of Sir Walter. 'Wherever,' in the words of Mr. Adolphus, 'it is possible for a dog in any way to contribute to the effect of a scene, we find there the very dog that was required, in his proper place and attitude.' Happily we are not left in ignorance of the names or the natures of the dogs which attended their master in his wanderings by Tweed side or on Yarrow. Camp, whose death Sir Walter lamented as that of a friend, and the Giant Maida, who 'sleeps soundly at his master's door,' will remain in kindly connection with the greatest name in modern literature, so long as literature itself shall last.

It is in fact the gentlest nature—such a union of gentleness with high independence and perfect courage as distinguished Sir Walter, 'the very perfect gentle knight'—which will most thoroughly appreciate the noble qualities of the dog, and to which the dog in turn will be most ready to attach

himself. During a time of most anxious watching and observation, Collingwood, the very ideal of an English sailor, could thus write to his wife about his Newfoundland, Bounce :—

‘Bounce is my only pet now, and he is indeed a good fellow. He sleeps by the side of my cot whenever I lie in one, until near the time of tacking, and then marches off to be out of hearing of the guns, for he is not reconciled to them yet.’—(Off Cadiz, 1805.)

Bounce was present with his master at Trafalgar, in the *Royal Sovereign*, and seems to have been unduly elated after Collingwood’s elevation to the peerage. In writing to his wife, after hoping that his daughters ‘will not give themselves foolish airs,’ the new-made Baron proceeds :—

‘I am out of all patience with Bounce. The consequential airs he gives himself since he became a Right Honourable dog are insufferable. He considers it beneath his dignity to play with commoners’ dogs ; and, truly, thinks that he does them grace when he condescends to lift his leg against them. This, I think, is carrying the insolence of rank to the extreme : but he is a dog that does it.’

The master who could make his dog point a moral thus pleasantly must have been gentle in every sense.

To what extent the best qualities of the dog react in their turn upon the rougher classes of humanity we will not now stop to inquire, although we fully believe that his influence in this way is at times very considerable. A dog may be far from the worst of teachers ; and in spite of the very ancient prejudice against him, to which we have more than once alluded, his opportunities of instruction have always been enormous, and can never diminish. In a word, our philosophy is that of the Prince of Denmark :—

‘Let Hercules himself do what he may,  
The cat will mew, the dog will have his day.’



#### IV.

### THE CHANGE OF FAITH IN ICELAND.

A.D. 1000.\*

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AT the entrance to the Arsenal in Venice stand a pair of colossal lions, brought from Athens in 1687, when that city was taken by the Venetians under Francesco Morosini. The lions, which are of antique workmanship, and have been celebrated in verse by Goethe, stood originally in the Piræus ; and on the side of one of them is carved a Runic inscription, which has recently been deciphered and explained by the learned Northern archæologist, M. C. C. Rafn. It records the capture of the Piræus by Harald Hardrada—that famous ‘King of Norse’ to whom his namesake, Harold of England, promised ‘seven feet of ground, or somewhat more, as he was a tall man,’ when the English king met and defeated him at Stamford Bridge in Yorkshire, about a month before he fell himself at Hastings. Before he became King of Norway, Harald had been Captain of the Varangian Guard at Constantinople ; and after the fall of the Piræus had, no doubt, employed the hand of one of his countrymen to trace, in the mystic characters of the North, the story of his conquest on the old Greek lion.

The fiercest viking spirit had become somewhat tamed before the days of Harald Hardrada ; but this single monument, with the strange mixture of races and countries which belongs to its history, is, perhaps, one of the most suggestive

\* *Quarterly Review*, January, 1862.

memorials of the Northern sea-rovers remaining in Europe. Full of interest as are all the details of their story, there is nothing about it which takes a firmer hold on the imagination than the wide stretch of their wanderings and conquests, the consequent jostling of the old world and the new, and the sharply contrasted pictures thence arising, which the Sagas indicate even more frequently than they supply at full length. Far wanderings and strange adventures are at once suggested when we read of a robe of Byzantine silk, embroidered with golden palm-leaves, worn by some Kiartan or Thorolf, and glancing in the red firelight of an Icelandic drinking-hall; or when we find the same Greek word as Homer would have used employed to designate the support of the mighty vessel of mead or of beer which cheered the hearts of Norse sea-kings on the shores of Caithness, or under the shadow of Heckla.\* To meet Goliath of Gath in an Icelandic version of his story, rejoicing in the title of 'that accursed Viking,' is scarcely more startling or unexpected.†

Hoard of Byzantine and Oriental coins, with Greek and Cufic inscriptions, are still brought to light from time to time in Iceland and Norway;—tangible relics of the old sea-kings, and proofs of their distant wanderings. Traces of their ancient presence may be found, too, on shores far from their own countries, in the shape of some monumental stone with its dragons and carved runes, or of such an inscription as that

\* 'Trapeza' is the word used for the beer-table in more than one Saga. Possibly a support for the great mead-vat was itself a refinement brought from Byzantium.

† The word 'viking,' as Mr. Dasent points out, is in no way akin to 'king.' 'It is derived from "vik," a bay or creek, because these sea rovers lay moored in bays or creeks on the look-out for merchant ships. The "ing" is a well-known ending, meaning, in this case, occupation or calling. In later times the word is used for any robber,' as in the Biblical paraphrase referred to above.—Dasent, *Story of Burnt Njal*, vol. ii. p. 353.

on the Venetian lion. But what remains of their influence on the cognate races with whom they mixed, first as conquerors and then as colonists? And how far is it possible to recognise the lingering presence of the spirit of the North, not only in the 'kirks' and 'bys' which dot the eastern and northern counties of England, and in the Scandinavian words and phrases which occur in the local dialects, but also in the dispositions and character of the people themselves? Without by any means asserting with Mr. Laing that we derive little or nothing from our Saxon ancestors, and that we are indebted to the infusion of Scandinavian blood for every free institution and good gift we possess, we may at least admit that the Northman has had his full share, both through the settlements of the Danelagh and the great conquest at Hastings, in the gradual formation of

'This happy breed of men—this earth—this England.'

Hence, besides the picturesque character of the narratives which show us the Northman in his own land—besides their strongly contrasted colours and their wild lights and shades—they have for us an especial interest as presenting us with full-length portraits of our own ancestors—on one side at all events—drawn with the minutest accuracy of detail, and as full of life and character as the most speaking canvases of Titian or Velasquez. It is not a little interesting to compare the features of such remote kinsmen with those of their later descendants, and to trace the Icelandic of the tenth century in the hospitable English Franklin of Chaucer's time, and, still more clearly, in the Condottieri captains, such as Hawkwood and Sir John Fastolfe, of the fifteenth century, or in the adventurous sea-rovers, such as Drake and Cavendish, of the sixteenth and seventeenth.

For the best aid towards such a comparison the English reader is under the deepest obligation to Mr. Dasent, trans-

lator of the *Story of Burnt Njal*. The Northman is nowhere more completely shown to us than in the Sagas of ancient Iceland ; and of these none is more important or more valuable, from the variety and minuteness of its details, than the Njal's Saga. Only those who are acquainted, however imperfectly, with this grand old story in its original language, can fully appreciate the beauty and fidelity of Mr. Dasent's version. Not only is the clear and simple English such as few modern writers—to their own infinite loss—care to employ, but, without any affectation of antiquity, the words most nearly related to the original Icelandic have been chosen wherever it was possible ; and the result is that the translation retains in a wonderful manner, not only the substance, but the colour and character of the original. Mr. Dasent has had his predecessors in the wide field of Northern literature : but his sketch of the 'Northmen in Iceland,' contained in the volume of *Oxford Essays* for 1858, and the Introduction and Appendices to his translation of the Njal's Saga, are beyond all doubt the most valuable aids to a real knowledge of the ancient North which the English reader has hitherto received.

Of all the Icelandic Sagas, the Njala, according to Mr. Dasent, whose judgment will be confirmed by every competent scholar, 'bears away the palm for truthfulness and beauty.' To use the words of one well qualified to judge, it is, as compared with all similar compositions, 'as gold to brass.' Like all its brethren, or at least like all those which relate to the same period, the Njal's Saga was not committed to writing until about one hundred years after the events which it records. It was handed down orally, told at the Althings, 'at all great gatherings of the people, and over many a fireside ; on sea-strand and river-bank, or up among the dales and hills ;' until at last, certainly before the year 1200, it was moulded into its present form. Of its general

truthfulness there can be no doubt. 'It was,' says Mr. Dasent, 'considered a grave offence to public morality to tell a story untruthfully: and besides internal evidence, the genuineness of Njala is confirmed by other Sagas, and by songs and annals, the latter of which are the earliest written records which belong to the history of Iceland.' 'Much,' says the translator, 'passes for history in other lands on far slighter grounds; and many a story in Thucydides or Tacitus, or even in Clarendon or Hume, is believed on evidence not one-tenth part so trustworthy as that which supports the narratives of these Icelandic story-tellers of the eleventh century.' We may therefore safely trust to them for what no other country perhaps in the world—certainly no other in Europe—can supply: minute pictures of life at one of the most important periods of national history—that of the introduction of Christianity. It is this which gives an especial interest to the Njala, the story of which extends from the middle of the tenth to the first years of the eleventh century: thus embracing a period of pure heathenism, the first attempts at conversion, and the final reception of the new faith in the Althing of the year 1000. We shall give our readers a sufficient idea of the Saga, and introduce them to some of its most picturesque passages, if we sketch as clearly as possible the history of this change in Iceland, availing ourselves largely of the stores collected by Mr. Dasent, but drawing also from such other authorities as are within our reach.

The Norwegian Jarls and freemen who fled from the novel rule of Harald Fairhair (A.D. 860-933), established themselves for the most part on the coasts of England, Ireland, and Scotland, and on the neighbouring islands, especially Orkney and Shetland. Some few—the first of whom was Ingolf, in the year 874—found their way across the Northern Sea to Iceland; but that country did not receive its most important colonists for some years after. Harald, who succeeded in consolidating

the royal power in Norway after the fashion of Charles the Great on the Rhine and in the Gauls, and of Athelstane in England, had rendered himself especially hateful to the freemen of Norway by his attacks on their ancient rights; and after they had withdrawn from the struggle, besides ravaging the chief shores of Western Europe, they revenged themselves on their former king by incessant pillages on those of Norway itself. Harald determined to attack them in their new settlements :—

‘He called,’ says Mr. Dasent, ‘on his chiefs to follow him, levied a mighty force, and, sailing suddenly with a mighty fleet which must have seemed an armada in those days, he fell upon the Vikings in Orkney and Shetland, in the Hebrides and Western Isles, in Man and Anglesey, in the Lewes and Faroe; wherever he could find them he followed them up with fire and sword. Not once but twice he crossed the sea after them, and tore them out so thoroughly, root and branch, that we hear no more of these lands as a lair of Vikings, but as the abode of Norse Jarls and their Udallers, who look upon the new state of things at home as right and just, and acknowledge the authority of Harald and his successors by an allegiance more or less dutiful at different times, but which was never afterwards entirely thrown off.’—(Vol. i. pp. xi., xii.)

Great numbers of the Vikings thus driven from the British Isles took refuge in Iceland. More than half the names recorded in the *Landnáma-bók*—the ‘Land-taking’ or Doomsday-book of Iceland, which contains the names and genealogies of the first settlers—are those of freemen who had before been settled on the coasts of Great Britain.

The manners, the institutions, and the religion brought from Norway to Iceland by the first colonists, are amply described in Mr. Dasent’s Introduction. We are here more immediately concerned with them in so far as they influenced the character of the Icelanders before conversion, and thereby affected the change of faith itself, and the nature of the Christianity which was then introduced. Two great points are especially to be noticed : the reverence for law and for

legal forms which the Icelanders possessed in common with all the Scandinavian and Teutonic races, and the duty of revenge for bloodshedding—also a common heritage, but one which nowhere receives such ample illustration as in the pages of the *Njal's Saga* itself. The right or duty of revenge arose out of the right of property which every head of a family was supposed to have in all his kinsmen and descendants. A system of compensations for wounds or loss of life was gradually introduced; and the person who did the wrong might, in the words of the Saxon law, either 'buy off the spear or bear it,' but one or the other he must do; and the relatives of the injured man were bound to carry out the feud to the last extremities, if the injurer refused to pay the legal fine or 'bloodwite.' An almost identical system yet prevails among the various Arab tribes; but, according to Mr. Burton, the duty of revenge has with them, at any rate in Arabia itself, the effect of rendering infrequent such tribal or family meetings, at which, as at the Icelandic *althings* or home festivals, fights and loss of life would most probably occur. Such is the Arab dread of the bloodshed which a feud would draw out in its progress, or of the money fine which must otherwise close it. Very different was the feeling of the old Icelanders. Odin, with them, was especially regarded as 'Valfader,' the 'father of battle;' an appeal to arms, in any shape, was an appeal to heaven:—

'Victory,' says Mr. Dasent, 'was indeed the sign of a rightful cause, and he that won the day remained behind to enjoy the rights which he had won in fair fight; but he that lost it, if he fell bravely and like a man, if he truly believed his quarrel just, and brought it, without guile, to the issue of the sword, went, by the very manner of his death, to a better place.'—(Vol. i. p. xxvii.)

Valhalla was ready for him. Hence the indifference to life among the Icelanders, who believed, moreover, that an inexorable fate hung over each man's life, against which it was in



vain to strive. To avoid a feud was thus not only unmanly, but useless. In following up the 'duty of revenge,' all that was essential was to act openly, like a man, and to show no shame for what had been done. 'To kill a man, and say that you had killed him, was manslaughter; to kill him, and not to take it on your hand, was murder.' In what manner this leading principle of the heathen Iclander was affected by Christianity we shall presently see. The reverence for law and for legal forms, thoroughly illustrated in the history and constitution of the Althing, of which Mr. Dasent gives an admirable account, supplied the direct method by which the change of faith was finally brought about.

Iceland continued heathen in its social life and in its courts of law for more than one hundred years before the first definite attempt at the conversion of the island. But it would probably be wrong to imagine that Christianity was entirely without influence, from the very first, on the national character. Among the earliest settlers, the first who took possession of the Western Dales at the head of Hvammsfirth was Aud the 'deeply wealthy,' mother of Thorstein the Red, who had been king over a portion of Caithness, in Scotland, where he was slain. On his death, in the year 892, Aud removed to Iceland, with all her wealth and her 'following.' She was a Christian—the first woman of that faith who set foot on the shore of the island, and the first to raise upon it the great Christian symbol. The lofty craig in the Dale country, on the top of which Aud set up the cross, is still known as 'Krossholar,' the Cross-hills; and although the shadow which it flung over the valley was only the earnest of a better time—for after Aud's death the cross was replaced by a heathen temple—it is difficult to believe that the faith introduced by so powerful a colonist, whose own character was marked by some of the highest qualities of her race, should have disappeared without leaving at least some recol-

lection behind it. At any rate, her last resting-place is still pointed out. She would not lie in unconsecrated earth, and was buried, according to her own desire, on the sands, below high-water mark, underneath a great stone, 'covered with mussel shells.'\* More than one of the first settlers from Norway also were 'half-Christians,' and were not unfavourably disposed toward the new faith, without as yet abandoning the old. Those who plundered and traded with foreign lands—and every Icelandic Viking was at the same time a 'chapman'—were sometimes brought into closer relations with the Christian religion. A ceremony called 'primsignaz,' ('prima signatio,') which seems in effect to have been a form of receiving a catechumen,† was frequently submitted to by chapmen and others who frequented Christian countries; 'For,' says the Saga of Egil Skallagrimson, 'they who had received the primsignaz might enter into any commerce with either Christians or heathens; but in religion they held whatever seemed best to them.'‡ Thus Athelstane of England required that Thorolf and his brother, a pair of famous Northern champions whom he was about to receive among his followers, should first undergo the 'primsignaz.' The ceremony was no doubt insisted on from a dread of the magical influences and other mysterious evils which might result from the unrestrained communications of Christians with the heathen worshippers of Thor and Odin. It may have been as purely formal as the Saga intimates, but at any rate it brought the Northman into peaceful contact with the Christian Church and its ministers, although he may have gazed with some unhallowed longing upon the golden crucifix and embroidered vestments of the priests who received him

\* Metcalfe's *Oxonian in Iceland*, p. 281.

† Perhaps resembling the 'Ordo ad faciendum Catechumenum' in the *Sarum Manual*. See Proctor's *Hist. of the Prayer Book*, p. 361.

‡ Egil's *Saga*, p. 265.

at the door of the minster. Thus the services of the 'bell-ringers,' as the Christian priests were called, were not altogether novelties when they came to be introduced in Iceland; and, as on the Scandinavian mainland itself, the first seeds of the new faith were no doubt planted there, however unconsciously, by the half-merchants, half-pirates, who returned at last to the island after long sojourn and service in Christian lands. In the character of the noblest Icelanders, especially towards the close of the heathen period, we may perhaps trace something of a general Christian influence which seems to have made itself felt over the whole North before the actual establishment of the Church. Take, for example, that of Thorwald Kodranson, called the 'far-farer,' who, while still a heathen, took service, toward the close of the tenth century, with Sweyn Forkbeard, King of Denmark :—

'Thorwald,' says the Saga, 'had not been long with King Sweyn ere the king set more store by him than by all his other men and friends; for Thorwald was a great man for good counsel, manifesting to every man his worth and foresight, strong in body and bold of heart, keen in combat and quick in battle, mild in temper and bountiful of money, and proved for trustiness and gentleness; beloved and befriended by all the king's followers, and not unworthily; for even then, as a heathen, he showed his justice before that of other heathens, inasmuch that all his share of plunder which he got on their cruises he bestowed on the needy and in ransoming captives; and thus he helped many who were in bad case. . . . Now, inasmuch as he was bolder in battle than others of the king's band, so they passed a law that he was to have the first choice of all their spoil; but he made this use of that honour, that he chose the sons of great men, or those things else which those who had lost them set most store by, but which his messmates cared least to give up, and sent them afterwards to those to whom they had belonged. . . . By that means . . . he set free King Sweyn himself. It so fell out that once on a time King Sweyn harried in Wales . . . and was there taken captive and cast into a dungeon, and Thorwald Kodranson along with him, and many other men of worth and rank. Next day came a mighty leader to the dark dungeon, with a great company, to take Thorwald out of prison; for a little while before he had set free the sons of this very leader, who had been taken captive, and sent them home free to their father. The leader bade Thorwald to come out and go away a free man; but Thorwald swore

that he would never go thence alive, unless King Sweyn were loosed and set free with all his men. The leader did this at once for his sake, as King Sweyn himself bore witness afterwards when he sat at a splendid feast with two other kings. And when the meat was set on the board, then one lord said that there would never again be a board so nobly filled as that, when three such mighty kings ate out of one dish. Then answers King Sweyn, with a smile, "I will find that stranger yeoman's son who alone has in himself, if right worth be set on it, not one whit less glory and true honour than all we three kings." Now there was much mirth at that in the hall; and all asked, with a laugh, where or what sort of man this might be of whom he tells such mighty fame. He answers, "This man of whom I speak is as wise as it befits a prudent king to be, as strong and stout-hearted as the most dauntless Baresark, and as good and gentle-hearted as the most virtuous sage." After that he told them of Thorwald that story which was written above, and how he set the king free for the sake of his friendship and for the sake of many other praiseworthy deeds.\*

Such is the character claimed by Mr. Dasent as that of the better class of Vikings. Without, however, in any way depreciating the noble qualities inherent in the race, we cannot but think that another and a higher influence is to be traced here. Thorwald—whom we shall presently meet as the first preacher of Christianity in Iceland—reminds us, while yet a heathen, of Sir Lancelot in the *Morte d'Arthur*, the gentlest and most courteous of knights in hall, the sternest and bravest in 'press of battle.'

But the most complete picture of the better Icelander during the heathen period is found in the pages of the *Njal's Saga* itself; the first portion of which is mainly occupied with the fortunes of Gunnar of Lithend, whose story, with that of Njal of Bergthorsknoll, has rendered the district of the Landeyar, backed as it is with the grand 'Three-corner' mountain, as completely romantic ground as the country about another 'triple height'—

'Where fair Tweed flows round holy Melrose,  
And Eildon slopes to the plain.'

\* Dasent, ii., pp. 356-7, from the *Biskupa Sögur*.

tripped and threw him off. He turned with his face up toward the Lithe and the homestead at Lithend, and said—

“Fair is the Lithe; so fair that it has never seemed to me so fair; the corn-fields are white to harvest, and the home mead is mown; and now I will ride back home and not fare abroad at all.”

“Do not this joy to thy foes,” says Kolskegg, “by breaking thy atonement; for no man could think thou wouldst do thus, and thou mayst be sure that all will happen as Njal has said.”

“I will not go away any whither,” says Gunnar; “and so I would thou shouldst do too.”—(Vol. i. p. 236.)

Njal, the ‘far-seer,’ had predicted that if Gunnar broke his atonement he would be slain ‘here in the land; and that is ill-knowing for those who are thy friends.’ Njal was a true prophet. During the next summer’s ‘Thing,’ Gizur the White summoned all Gunnar’s foes to meet in the ‘Almannagya,’ the great volcanic rift which bounds the plain of the Althing on its eastern side. At that meeting an onslaught was planned against Gunnar. Njal warned him of it in vain; and in the autumn Gizur the White and his company rode to Lithend and attacked the house by night. There, after Aunund of Witchwood had killed Samr, Gunnar’s Irish hound, who gave ‘such a great howl that they thought it passing strange’—

‘Gunnar woke up in his hall, and said—

“Thou hast been sorely treated, Samr, my fosterling; and this warning is so meant that our deaths will not be far apart. . . .”

‘Gunnar slept in a loft above the hall, and so did Halgerda and his mother. . . .

‘Thorgrim the Easterling went and began to climb up on the hall. Gunnar sees that a red kirtle passed before the window-slit, and thrusts out the bill, and smote him on the middle. Thorgrim’s feet slipped from under him, and he dropped his shield, and down he toppled from the roof.

‘Then he goes to Gizur and his band, as they sat on the ground.

‘Gizur looked at him, and said—

“Well, is Gunnar at home?”

“Find out that for yourselves,” said Thorgrim; “but this I am sure of, that his bill is at home.”

‘And with that he fell down dead.’—(Vol. i. p. 242.)

The foes attacked the house, and at last pulled off the roof

the whole Saga, and which at last brought about the burning of Njal, with his wife and sons. The evil nature of Halgerda, and the mischief that would arise from her, had been 'fore-spæd' when she was still a child ; and after her marriage with Gunnar, Njal, who was possessed of a mysterious fore-knowledge, frequently noticed in the Sagas, and which seems greatly to have resembled the second sight of the Gael, declared that she 'would come very near' to spoil the friendship between himself and Gunnar, who, he added, 'would have always to make atonement for her.' Death after death, murder after murder, resulted from the quarrel which soon fell out between Halgerda and Bergthora, the wife of Njal ; but the friendship was not broken. 'I will hold to my faithfulness to thee,' said Njal, when the feud had long been raging, 'till my death-day ;' and both he and Gunnar, who might have refused to receive compensation for the frequent slaughter of kinsmen and house-thralls, generally settled the blood-fine between themselves, until Gunnar, hard beset and injured, took to avenge his own wrongs, though unwillingly. 'I would like to know,' he asked, 'whether I am by so much the less brisk and bold than other men, because I think more of killing men than they.'

At last a great fight took place on the Rang river, at which Gunnar and his brothers killed many of their enemies. At the following Althing, atonement for this loss of life was decreed ; and Gunnar was ordered into exile for three years. Accordingly, he prepares to depart :—

'The day after, he gets ready early for his journey to the ship, and told all his people that he would ride away for good and all ; and men took that much to heart ; but still they said that they looked to his coming back afterwards.

'Gunnar threw his arms round each of the household when he was "boun," and every one of them went out of doors with him ; he leans on the butt of his spear, and leaps into the saddle ; and he and Kolskegg ride away.

'They ride down along Markfleet, and just then Gunnar's horse

Gunnar fell in the year 990. There is no indication in the Saga of his having been brought more directly under Christian influence than appears in his noble character; yet, nearly ten years before his death, the first definite attempt at the conversion of the island had been undertaken. We must return to Thorwald Kodranson, the 'far-farer,' whom we have already encountered as one of the best of heathen Vikings. In one of his many wanderings Thorwald visited the country of the Saxons, and was there converted and baptized by a priest named Frederick. Neither country nor priest can be distinctly recognized from the brief notice of the Saga; but, although we should gladly believe that the 'country of the Saxons' was England, and that Frederick was an Englishman, it is more probable that the Saxon country is to be sought on the borders of the Elbe, and that the priest belonged to the Archiepiscopal Church of Hamburg—the outpost which Charles the Great had founded, and which had long served as a great missionary station for the conversion of the North. A bull of Pope Gregory IV. appointed the first Archbishop, St. Anschar, and his successors, 'legates' and missionaries over the whole of Northern Europe: and it was possibly with the permission of Adeldag, then Archbishop of Hamburg, that Frederick, after consecration as 'chorepiscopus,' set out with his new convert, Thorwald, for Iceland in the spring of the year 981.

Thorwald's home was at Gilia in Vatnsdal, in the northern division of the island; and although, from the bishop's ignorance of Norse, Thorwald was obliged to act as interpreter, a considerable effect was at once produced throughout the cairn in which the hero is buried sitting upright, and in which he was heard singing after his burial (*Saga*, ch. 77), is still pointed out, near the traditional site of his skáli, or hall. 'To the right of the path which leads thither, a little mound marks the resting-place of the faithful Samr, his big Irish hound.



district. Three of the most wealthy landowners were baptized : another consented to receive the 'primsignaz ;' and during the following winter, Kodran, the father of Thorwald, who had been a Viking of no small reputation, changed his faith and was baptized with all his household—one son, Orm, alone excepted. According to the Sagas, the conversion of the old Viking was the result of a struggle between the Christian bishop and a household spirit (*fylgia*?) especially honoured by Kodran. The home of the spirit, who protected the household and the flocks of Kodran, and who predicted future events for him, was a great block of stone in the Vatnsdal. Bishop Frederick, wearing his episcopal robes, went to it in solemn procession, and after chanting over the stone, sprinkled it with holy water. On the following night the spirit, who seems to have been a true northern elf, presented himself to Kodran, all sad and trembling, and reproached him with the wrong he had permitted. 'The men thou hast brought here,' he complained, 'have poured hot water on my house, and my children have been scalded by the drops which fell through the roof. It has not hurt me much ; but it is hard to bear the crying of the bairns.' Twice again the bishop sprinkled the stone ; and twice again the spirit appeared to Kodran, each time with sadder looks, and with dress more stained and tattered. 'This Christian bishop,' he said, 'has spoilt my house and my clothes, and has scalded me and my children, so that we can never be cured. Now we must go far into the mountains.'\* The stone itself split into fragments ; † and Kodran, who recognised the superior power of the bishop, was immediately baptized.

For four succeeding winters the head-quarters of Thorwald and Bishop Frederick were at Lækiamot in Vididal. During

\* Olaf Tryggvason's *Saga*, ch. 131.

† *Kristni-Saga*, ch. 2. This story is remarkable for its close resemblance to later folk-lore.

the summers they passed far and wide throughout the island ; but the results of their teaching were most evident in the Northern quarter, where it had commenced. At a great harvest feast in Vatnsdal, where the Christians were separated from the heathens by curtains hung across the hall,\* Bishop Frederick is said to have outmatched a pair of fierce Berserks, who used to pass through the hearth fire with impunity, but who, on this occasion, after the bishop had blessed the flames, fell in the midst, and were carried out dead. Thorkel Krafla, the chief personage in Vatnsdal, consented to receive the 'primsignaz' in consequence. Such stories lost nothing with advancing years ; but it is sufficiently clear that, however produced, a great dread of the Christians, and of interference with them, was beginning to prevail throughout the island. In the North, where many idols had been destroyed, and where the temple offerings were beginning to fail, Thorwald Spakbodvarson had built the first Christian church at As, on the bank of the Hialtadal river, where its site is still pointed out. It was served by one of the priests of Bishop Frederick's following. This church, built like their own temples, of driftwood, and roofed with turfs, was a perpetual eyesore to the heathens of the district ; and Klaufi, one of the chief men of the quarter, made two attempts to destroy it, both of which were, according to the Saga, miraculously averted. The church had probably been watched by Thorwald ; and, with the exception of a few fresh turfs now and then added to the roof, this first rude resting-place of the faith in Iceland† remained as Thorwald had built it for some centuries after the conversion of the whole

\* Olaf Tryggvison's *Saga*, ch. 132.

† Thorwald Bodvārson, the builder of this church, is generally said to have been converted by Bishop Frederick. Others, however (and apparently with reason), assert that he was converted in England, and that he brought from this country the materials for the first Christian church in Iceland (Olaf's *Saga*, ch. 226).

country. A relic of Bishop Frederick's time may still be seen at Hvanm, the settlement of And the wealthy. On the church door is fastened a ring, which is said to have belonged to the old heathen temple, in which Fridgerda, wife of the then lord of Hvanm, was heard loudly invoking the ancient deities, whilst the Saxon bishop was preaching close without.\*

It was after their success in the northern quarter that Bishop Frederick and Thorwald appeared at the Althing, and that Thorwald, with the bishop at his side, addressed the people from that famous 'Logberg'—the hill of the law—which still rises, in the midst of its lava rifts, at the head of the lake of Thingvalla. Full of stirring memories as is the whole plain of the Althing, and grand as are the figures which haunt the foundations of the ruined bothies, few more striking scenes can rise to the mind's eye of the traveller, as he crushes the wild thyme on the now silent hill of the law, than this, when a Christian bishop, with the cross uplifted at his side, stood for the first time in the midst of the fierce Thingmen, carrying his life in his hand, and proclaiming the true 'Ragnarokr'—the real 'twilight' of the old gods. As before, Thorwald acted as his interpreter; and the heathen party, with a certain Hedinn as their chief, assailed him so bitterly with mocking rhymes—a favourite Icelandic weapon—that the viking spirit was roused once more in the breast of the Christian Thorwald, who killed two men before the close of the Althing. Little seems to have been effected by the bishop's appearance on the Law Mount. The heathens were as yet in full strength; and although a certain fear of the Christians—probably from an idea of their skill as magicians—seems to have prevailed, they were unable to appear again at the Althing. Thorwald and the bishop were declared legally guilty of the two deaths; and at the next year's

\* *Kristni-Saga*; Metcalfe, *Oxonian in Iceland*, p. 279.

Althing a company of the chief men set out for Lækiamot to burn the bishop, which they would have done had they not been 'thrown into confusion' by the way. Bishop Frederick, however, seems to have perceived that his further labours at this time would be in vain. After passing four years in Iceland, he crossed to Norway with Thorwald. There, as their ship was still in the haven, Thorwald was told that Hedinn, the Icelfander who had taunted him at the Althing, was on shore and close at hand. The spirit of revenge leapt again to life ; and, accompanied by a single thrall, Thorwald laid wait for Hedinn and killed him. Seeing him 'so greedy of revenge,' the bishop broke up the brotherhood and returned south to 'Saxland,' where he died, says the Saga, 'truly a saint-like man.' The end of Thorwald the 'farfarer,' the best of Vikings, if but an imperfect Christian, is not so certain. The *Kristni-Saga* asserts that, after long wanderings in the Holy Land and elsewhere, he 'received Christ's quiet' in Russia, and was buried in a church dedicated to St. John the Baptist on the top of a mountain, near which he had built a monastery. There he was himself reckoned among the saints.\* Others assert that he served for some time in the Varangian guard at Byzantium, and that he built there a monastery, in which he became a monk ; † one of the most striking examples, if not the earliest, of that devotion to the monastic life which was afterwards so conspicuous among the brethren of Thorwald in England and in Normandy.

Ten years passed away after the departure of Bishop Frederick, before a second attempt was made to convert the island. In the meantime Olaf Tryggvi's son, the royal 'Apostle' of Norway, had been converted and baptized in one

\* *Kristni-Saga*, ch. 12. 'He was honoured by all bishops and abbots throughout the Greek empire, and throughout Syria.'—Olaf Tryggvason's *Saga*, ch. 138.

† F. Johannæus, *Hist. Eccles. Islandiæ*, i. p. 47.

of the Scilly islands (A.D. 993).<sup>\*</sup> Two years later (995) Olaf became King of Norway, and commenced at once the introduction of Christianity throughout his dominions at the point of the sword. Before his return Olaf had received among his followers an Iclander named Stefner, who had been converted in Denmark, where he had fallen in with Thorwald the 'far-farer,' after his separation from Bishop Frederick. With him Stefner had made a pilgrimage to the East, and to the 'holy places.' At Olaf's request he now proceeded to Iceland as a Christian missionary. But Stefner's Christianity was scarcely more advanced than that of the royal Viking; and after a bad reception from the inhabitants, and after preaching in vain along the northern and southern coasts, he attempted stronger measures, and proceeded to burn the temples and to destroy the images of the gods. This violent argument, which Olaf managed with tolerable success in Norway, was not duly appreciated in Iceland. Stefner was set upon by the fierce worshippers of Odin and of Thor, and escaped with difficulty to Kialarnes, where he lay hid for some time among his own kinsmen. During the winter his ship, which had been laid up at the mouth of the Gulfa river, was driven out to sea. The god Freyr—'all-riker Freyr'—Freyr the 'all-rich' or all-powerful—thus avenged himself, according to the verse-makers, for the insult which had been offered his dominions. The ship, however, was thrown back on the coast, shattered, but capable of repair; and in the following summer Stefner, from her deck, looked for the last time on the snowy peaks of the Icelandic Jokülls. At the previous Althing a law had been passed forbidding 'fire and

<sup>\*</sup> Olaf's *Saga*, ch. 78, 79. According to the Saga, Olaf was persuaded to embrace Christianity by a 'spanan' or hermit, on another of the islands, who foretold much of his future life. He was baptized by the abbot of a rich monastery. The only monastic establishment in Scilly of which any record survives was a cell of Tavistock Abbey, that certainly existed on the island of Tresco before the Conquest.

water' to all those who should preach or embrace the new faith, and ordering the kinsmen of the offender to take up the action against him at the Law Mount. In this manner Stefner had been accused and exiled.

Up to this time the heathen party was by far the most powerful in the island. In the old religion of the Northmen there was a certain recognition of its own imperfection,\* and the faith of the Icelanders in Thor and his brethren may not at this period have been profound; but there was a strong feeling that the teaching of the 'White Christ' would weaken the arm and subdue the courage of all those who listened to it. Everywhere, throughout the North, Christianity seems to have been thus regarded on its first introduction; and it has been suggested, with much probability, that the systematic descents of the Northmen on the coasts of Western Europe, throughout the ninth and tenth centuries, were undertaken, not from love of plunder only, but from a strong feeling of the opposition of the Christian faith, every day advancing farther northward, to the fierce, death-despising spirit of the true son of Odin.† Besides this general hatred of Christianity, there was in Iceland a distrust of any change introduced from Norway, the country from which the first colonists had separated themselves for the sake of freedom; and the threatened loss of the temple-offerings—which soon after Bishop Frederick's arrival had become a reality in the northern quarter—no doubt powerfully influenced the 'hofmen' or priests, always the chief personages of the district.

In spite of all this, however, and in spite of the law which had just been passed at the Althing, it is clear that the Christians had never entirely lost their ground. The year

\* Dasent, *Burnt Njal*, i. p. xvi.

† See Mr. Dasent's 'Norsemen in Iceland,' in the *Oxford Essays* for 1858, p. 166.

after Stefner had been driven from Iceland, Olaf despatched thither a second missionary, whose Christianity was at least as fiercely muscular as that of his predecessor. This was a priest named Thangbrand, son of Wilibald, Count of Bremen, and a 'clerk' of Adalbert, Bishop of Aros in Jutland. The Saga of Olaf Tryggvison, probably first compiled toward the end of the twelfth century by an Icelandic monk, who collected with especial delight all the legendary stories which grew up round the record of the king's conversion, gives us a curious account of Olaf's early connection with Thangbrand. Bishop Adalbert, attended by a large 'following,' in which Thangbrand was included, once, it is said, visited his brother Hubert, Bishop of 'Kantaraborg,' or Canterbury.\* Hubert distributed rich gifts to his guests on their departure; and when he came to Thangbrand, he said, 'Thou followest the fashions of a knight, although thou art a clerk; therefore I give thee this shield, on which is marked the holy cross, with the likeness of our Lord Christ. It will remind thee of thine office.' It afterwards fell out that Olaf Tryggvison, during one of his forays in 'Saxland,' encountered Thangbrand, bearing this very shield. Struck with its device, he asked 'who it was that Christian men thus revered.' 'Our Lord Jesus Christ,' answered Thangbrand. 'And what had he done,' asked Olaf, 'that he was thus tormented?' Then Thangbrand, says the Saga, 'explained to him with great care the passion of our Lord, and all the marvels of the Cross.' And Olaf, before leaving him, bought his shield

\* The name is so given in the *Saga* of Olaf Tryggvison, and in the *Kristni-Saga*. Whatever truth there may be in the story, however, Hubert cannot be identified with any archbishop of Canterbury, nor can he have been a suffragan bishop of St. Martin's, as the editor of the *Kristni-Saga* suggests. The name of his true see had possibly become confounded with that of the city of St. Thomas, the great fame of which was extending throughout Europe about the time of the compilation of the *Olaf's Saga*.



for a great heap of silver, bidding Thangbrand come to him if he were ever in need of a protector. Afterwards Olaf was baptized in Scilly : and Thangbrand, whose priesthood sat but lightly on him, bought with the Viking's silver a goodly Irish damsel, whom he took to his home. For a manslaughter committed on account of this fair 'mey,' Thangbrand was obliged to leave Denmark. He sought and found Olaf Tryggvison, then on the English coast, and, returning with him to Norway, was made priest of a little church on the island of Mostr, on the north coast—the first Christian church in Norway,\* built by Olaf on the spot where he had ordered mass to be sung before him, on his landing from Ireland to contest the kingdom with Jarl Hakon.

As priest of Mostr, Thangbrand's piratical instincts were soon brought into full play. The few new converts in the surrounding district of Hordaland brought their offerings to the church but rarely. Thangbrand was attended by a large body of followers, and, to support his 'hall' becomingly, he proceeded to harry the adjoining mainland with as little scruple as the most heathen of Vikings. Olaf, to whom the inhabitants complained, sent for Thangbrand, and, as a punishment, imposed on him the preaching of Christianity in Iceland, whence Stefner had just returned. A good ship was provided for the new missionary, who set out with many companions, priests and laymen, among whom was an Icelander named Gudleif, 'a great manslayer, and one of the strongest of men, and hardy and forward in everything.'† 'Thangbrand was a tall man,' says the Saga, 'and strong, skilful of speech, a good clerk, and a good warrior; able for all manly sports, and firm of mind, albeit a teacher of the faith; not provoking others, but once angered, and he would yield to no man in deeds or in words.'‡ In the

\* Olaf Tryggvison's *Saga*, ch. 99.

† *Burnt Njal*, ii. p. 64.

‡ Olaf's *Saga*, ch. 188.

summer of 997 this not very promising champion of the faith set out for Iceland.

That the struggle between heathenism and Christianity was now felt to be vital, and that the heathen party was beginning to lose heart, is perhaps indicated to some extent by a curious story preserved in the *Olaf's Saga*. One of the chief personages of the south-west district was Hall of the Side, so named from his ownership of a long strip of hill-side, overlooked by the peaks and craters of the *Skaptá-Jökul*. The youngest and best-loved of his sons was Thidrandi, whose praises were in every one's mouth, with the exception of Thorhall, a 'seer,' or foresighted man, who, when asked what he saw amiss in the lad, declared that an evil fate hung over him. On a certain night Thidrandi was warned by the seer not to stir out of his father's house, whatever might happen. But when all were in bed, three loud knocks sounded at the door of the hall, and Thidrandi, who alone was awake, thinking it shame that the hospitality of the Side should receive a slur, went out into the yard. There he saw on one side nine women in black raiment, riding from the north on black horses, and holding drawn swords in their hands. Against them from the south came nine other women, in white raiment, and on white horses. As Thidrandi tried to get back into the house the nine women in black fell on him with their swords, and mortally wounded him. Thorhall, the seer, just then roused from his sleep, went into the court and found Thidrandi, who was able to tell his story, but died at early dawn. Of his enemies there was no trace. When Hall asked the seer what all this meant, he answered, 'I know not, but I can guess that these were no other women than the guardian spirits of thy race, and I suspect that a change of faith is about to happen, and that these your goddesses must have seen what is coming to pass, and that they are angry at it, lest they should not have the respect paid to them to

which they have been wont.\* The same 'foresighted man,' on another occasion, whilst lying in bed about daybreak, was observed by Hall to smile strangely. When he asked why, Thorhall answered that he saw the little mounds (the houses of the trolls and dwarfs) open over all the country, and the creatures within them making up their bundles, and preparing to set off.†

We are now brought again into the company of the *Njála*, which records the arrival and the deeds of Thangbrand. His ship came to land at Bernfirth, on the eastern coast. Two brothers—Thorleif and Kettle—who dwelt there, finding probably that Christian priests were on board, forbade the people of the district, in accordance with the law of the Althing, to have any dealings with the new-comers. But Hall of the Side, who was then at Thvattwater, not far south of Bernfirth—and who was evidently not unfavourable to the new faith—

'— rode to the ship with twenty-nine men, and he fares at once to find Thangbrand, and spoke to him, and asked him—

' "Trade is rather dull, is it not?"

' He answered that so it was.

' "Now will I say my errand," says Hall; "it is that I wish to ask you all to my house, and run the risk of my being able to get rid of your wares for you."

' Thangbrand thanked him, and fared to Thvattwater that harvest.

' It so happened one morning that Thangbrand was out early, and made them pitch a tent on land, and sang mass in it, and took much pains with it, for it was a great high-day.

' Hall spoke to Thangbrand, and asked, "In memory of whom keepest thou this day?"

' "In memory of Michael the Archangel," says Thangbrand.

' "What follows that angel?" asked Hall.

' "Much good," says Thangbrand; "he will weigh all the good that thou doest; and he is so merciful, that whenever any one pleases him he makes his good deeds weigh more."

' "I would like to have him for my friend," says Hall.

\* *Olaf's Saga*, ch. 215; Dasent, i. xx.

† *Olaf's Saga*, ch. 215.

“That thou mayst well have,” says Thangbrand; “only give thyself over to him, by God’s help, this very day.”

“I only make this condition,” says Hall, “that thou give thy word for him that he will then become my guardian angel.”

“That I will promise,” says Thangbrand.

‘Then Hall was baptized, and all his household.’

The following spring Thangbrand set out to preach Christianity, accompanied by Hall.

‘When they came west across Lonsheath to Staffell, there they found a man dwelling named Thorkell. He spoke most against the faith, and challenged Thangbrand to single combat. Then Thangbrand bore a rood-cross before his shield, and the end of their combat was, that Thangbrand won the day, and slew Thorkell.’

Many households were baptized; and the heathen party were not a little disturbed at the success of the new missionary.

‘There was a man named Sorcerer Hedinn, who dwelt in Carlinedale. There heathen men made a bargain with him that he should put Thangbrand to death with all his company. He fared upon Arnstacks Heath, and there made a great sacrifice when Thangbrand was riding from the east. Then the earth burst asunder under his horse, but he sprang off his horse, and saved himself on the brink of the gulf; but the earth swallowed up the horse and all his harness, and they never saw him more.

‘Then Thangbrand praised God.

‘Gudleif now searches for Sorcerer Hedinn, and finds him on the heath, and chases him down into Carlinedale, and gets within spear-shot of him, and shoots a spear at him and through him.’

Others, who ‘spoke against the faith,’ were killed by Thangbrand and the fierce ‘manslayer’ Gudleif; and in the south they made one convert of great importance. This was Njal, the hero of the Saga which bears his name; the gentlest and the wisest man in all the island. Long before, when men had said in Njal’s hearing that it was ‘a strange and wicked thing to throw off the old faith,’ he had answered them, ‘It seems to me as though this new faith must be much better, and he will be happy who follows this rather than the other; and if those men come out hither who preach this faith, then I will

back them well.' 'He went often alone away from other men, and muttered to himself.'

Now, Njal 'took the faith, and all his house,' an was of great service at the ensuing Althing, when Thangbrand 'spoke boldly' for Christianity, and the heathens would have fallen on him had not Njal and the 'Eastfirthers' stood by him. At this Althing Hjalldi Skeggi's son sang a mocking rhyme on the Hill of Laws—

'Ever will I gods blaspheme ;  
Freyja, methinks, a dog doth seem.  
Freyja a dog ? Ay ! let them be  
Both dogs together, Odin and she.'

An allusion, it has been suggested, to some mythological legend which has not come down to us. For this outrage he was exiled, and 'fared abroad' that summer, accompanied by Gizur the White.

In the meantime Thangbrand's ship, like Stefner's before him, 'was wrecked away east, at Bulandsness, and the ship's name was Bison.' Thangbrand himself passed through the western and northern quarters, in both of which he baptized many households, using, in the north, the lake of Myvatn as a baptistery. Here, however, he attacked and killed, whilst cutting turfs with his house-carles, Veturlid the Scald, who had made rhymes on him. In the west country—

'Steinvora, the mother of Ref the Scald, came against him ; she preached the heathen faith to Thangbrand, and made him a long speech. Thangbrand held his peace while she spoke, but made a long speech after her, and turned all that she had said the wrong way against her.

"'Hast thou heard," she said, "how Thor challenged Christ to single combat, and how he did not dare to fight with Thor ?"

"'I have heard tell," says Thangbrand, "that Thor was nought but dust and ashes, if God had not willed that he should live."

It was Thor, according to Steinvora, who shattered the ship. From her they 'fared west' to Bardastrand.



'Gest Oddleff's son dwelt at Hagi on Bardastrand. He was one of the wisest of men, so that he foresaw the fates and fortunes of men. He made a feast for Thangbrand and his men. They fared to Hagi with sixty men. Then it was said there were two hundred heathen men to meet them, and that a Baresark was looked for to come hither, whose name was Otrygg, and all were afraid of him. Of him such great things as these were said, that he feared neither fire nor sword, and the heathen men were sore afraid at his coming. Then Thangbrand asked if men were willing to take the faith; but all the heathen men spoke against it.

"Well," says Thangbrand, "I will give you the means whereby ye shall prove whether my faith is better. We will hallow two fires. The heathen men shall hallow one, and I the other; but a third shall be unhallowed; and if the Baresark is afraid of the one that I hallow, but treads both the others, then he shall take the faith."

"That is well spoken," says Gest, "and I will agree to this for myself and my household."

'And when Gest had so spoken, then many more agreed to it.

'Then it was said that the Baresark was coming up to the home-stand; and then the fires were made, and burnt strong. Then men took their arms, and sprang up on the benches, and so waited.

'The Baresark rushed in with his weapons. He comes into the room, and treads at once the fire which the heathen men had hallowed, and so comes to the fire that Thangbrand had hallowed, and dares not to tread it, but said that he was on fire all over. He hews with his sword at the bench, but strikes a cross-beam as he brandishes the weapon aloft. Thangbrand smote the arm of the Baresark with his crucifix, and so mighty a token followed that the sword fell from the Baresark's hand.

'Then Thangbrand thrust a sword into his breast, and Gudleif smote him on the arm, and hewed it off. Then many went up and slew the Baresark.

'After that Thangbrand asked if they would take the faith now?

'Gest said he had only spoken what he meant to keep to.

'Then Thangbrand baptized Gest, and all his house, and many others. Then Thangbrand took counsel with Gest whether he should go any farther west among the firths; but Gest set his face against that, and said they were a hard race of men there, and ill to deal with; "but if it be foredoomed that this faith shall make its way, then it will be taken as law at the Althing, and then all the chiefs out of the districts will be there."

"I did all that I could at the Thing," says Thangbrand, "and it was very up-hill work."

"Still thou hast done most of the work," says Gest, "though it may be fated that others shall make Christianity law; but it is here, as the saying runs, 'No tree falls at the first stroke.'"

'After that Gest gave Thangbrand good gifts, and he fared back south. . . . He turned in as a guest at Bergthoraknoll, and Njal gave him good gifts. Thence he rode east to Altafirth, to meet Hall of the Side. He caused his ship to be mended, and heathen men called it "Iron-basket." On board that ship Thangbrand fared abroad, and Gudleif with him.'

He was in effect compelled to leave Iceland, since he had been exiled at the Althing on account of his many man-slaughters.

Although Thangbrand's Christianity was evidently of the rudest, and his mode of proceeding by no means conciliatory, he seems in effect to have advanced the cause of the new faith more than a step. His name still figures in Icelandic folk-lore. High up on the skirts of the Snaefells Jokul is a pinnacle of rock shaped like a human figure looking intently to the westward. It was once a Troll-girl, who, when crossing the rocks by night to meet her lover in Snaefell, encountered the Christian Thangbrand. Wherever she turned he stood before her with the cross in his hand. A Troll on whom the sunbeams fall at once stiffens into stone: and, thinking only of her human lover, she struggled to advance, always kept back by the cross, until the morning light fixed her on the summit of the pass for ever.\*

Thangbrand returned at once to Norway; Hjaltili and Gizur the White also reached Nidaros, the harbour of Tronjhem, in the autumn of 999. There they fell in with many Icelanders, among whom was Kiartan, son of Olaf the Peacock; and there they found Olaf Tryggvison himself, who had just returned south from the 'christening' of Halogaland. Thangbrand, the missionary, was also at Nidaros, and had reported his ill success to the king, adding, that it seemed impossible to make Christianity the law of Iceland. Olaf, seized with a true Viking's frenzy, ordered all the Icelanders in the harbour to be imprisoned, and

\* Metcalfe, *Oxonian in Iceland*, p. 298.

threatened them with loss of limbs and with death. But Gizur and Hjalldi, accompanied by other Icelanders who had embraced Christianity, presented themselves before the king, and reminded him of his promise, made long before, that any man, whatever his crime might be, should receive 'peace' and go free, if he would only consent to become a Christian. Thangbrand, they said, had lived as turbulently in Iceland as he had done in Norway. He had killed men instead of persuading them. With time and good management the King might yet see his desire fulfilled. Olaf finally consented to admit the Icelanders to his 'peace,' provided Gizur and Hjalldi would undertake a third mission to the island, and would employ all their influence to render it successful. Four of the noblest Icelanders, one of whom was Kiartan, were to remain with Olaf as hostages. Gizur consented; and after remaining at Tronjhem in great honour as the King's guests all that winter, during which many of the Icelanders in Norway were baptized, he and Hjalldi set out for Iceland in the spring of the year 1000. A priest named Thormod, and many other ecclesiastics, went with them; and the King gave them timber for building a church on the spot where they should first land. After a ten-weeks' voyage they arrived at the Westmann Islands—those tall, dark, basaltic masses which lie off the southern coast of Iceland, and are within sight of the principal places celebrated in the Njál. On the northern point of Hörgaeyre, where the heathen stone of sacrifice had hitherto stood, they laid the foundations of King Olaf's church, and after a stay of two days on the Westmanndeyar, crossed to the mainland.

Before reaching the Westmann Islands, however, as their ship rounded the cliffs of Dyrholm, it had been seen by Flosi 'the burner'—so called from the share which he afterwards had in the burning of Njal, who was riding across Arnstack's Heath on his way to the Althing. From men whom he sent



off to the ship, Flosi learnt the cause of its arrival, as well as all that had passed in Norway. One of the hostages retained by Olaf was his own brother Kolbein; and Flosi, who had received the 'primsignaz' from Thangbrand, but had not yet declared himself a Christian, rode on to the Thing and spread the news.

Hjallti and Gizur, with a company of thirty men, crossed from the islands on the very day that men throughout all that part of the country were journeying to the Althing. Thither they determined to proceed at once; but that strip of the southern coast was under the rule of Runolf the priest, who had been Hjallti's accuser for his attack on Odin and Freya, and no one would supply the new-comers with horses, or would even set them across the Rang river. They went on foot, therefore, to the house of the next proprietor, who mounted them. At Langardal, the Geyser valley which lies in the direct road, they persuaded Hjallti, who, having been legally exiled, had something to fear from Runolf and his personal enemies, to remain, with a following of twelve men, until Gizur should get the 'peace' of the Thing for him. The rest rode on to the hot spring called the 'Boiling Kettle,' close above the Raven-rift, the great volcanic 'cleft' which bounds the Thing-field on the south. Thence they sent word to the Christians, and to those of their friends who were already at the Thing, to come to meet them; for the heathen party had been greatly enraged at Flosi's news, and threatened to prevent by force the appearance of Gizur at the Law Mount. Hjallti himself came up at the same moment, declaring that he would run all risks; and the whole company, now of considerable strength, with spears in warlike array, and with much glancing of gold and red kirtles, descended together the steep side of the Raven-rift.

The scene which opened to them at the top of the rift has been little changed, and is familiar to us from the descriptions

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of recent tourists.\* Immediately below spread the green plain of the Thingfield, dotted with birch coppice, and extending southward to the broad lake of Thingvalla. At the back of the plain a mass of rugged lava stretches upward to the snowy cone of the Skjaldbreid mountain, from which all the lava of the district has flowed, and to which is owing the singular depression of the Thingfield itself. Spiral columns of steam ascend from the cones and craters which fringe the lake; and at a distance of about three miles across the plain Hjalldi could see the Law Mount, the scene of his coming struggle, the booths of the Thingmen stretching along the banks of the Oxara river, and the black walls of the Almannagya—the ‘All-men’s rift’—closing in the Thingfield on the north. Between the birch wood and along the shore of the lake the new-comers rode until they reached the booth of Asgrim, sister’s son of Gizur. The heathen party, fully armed, gathered in knots, and looked threateningly; but the night passed over without a skirmish.

On the following morning the priest Thormod sang mass in the Westfirding’s booth, above the Oxara river; and thence the Christians proceeded, in solemn procession, to the Hill of Laws. Seven ecclesiastics, duly vested, led the way, two of whom carried a pair of great crosses, the height of one measuring that of King Olaf Tryggvason—of the other, that of Hjalldi himself. Clouds of incense-smoke, the scent of which spread far in the clear, sharp air, rose from their swinging thuribles.† The whole Thing was collected about the Law

\* By far the best and most minute ‘topography of the Thingfield’ is given, with excellent plans, by Mr. Dasent, in the Introduction to *Burnt Njal* (vol. i.). Both Captain Forbes (*Iceland, its Volcanoes, Geysers, and Glaciers*) and Mr. Metcalfe (*Oxonian in Iceland*) supply some interesting details; but better than either of their descriptions is that of Lord Dufferin, in his *Letters from High Latitudes*.

† It is especially said that the perfume spread against the wind as well as with it (*Kristni-Saga*, ch. xi.).

Mount ; and no attempt was made to prevent the entrance of Hjalldi and his companions by the narrow tongue of land which alone gives access to the Logberg, separated from the plain on all sides by deep volcanic fissures. On the Mount Hjalldi and Gizur both spoke 'well and boldly'—so well and so boldly, that, according to the Saga, their enemies had not a word of reply, and were reduced to loud shouting and tumult, both Christians and heathens declaring that they would no longer submit to the same general laws. In the midst of the confusion 'came a man running in' with the news that 'earth-fire'—a lava-stream—had just broken out in the district of Olfus, and was threatening to destroy the farm of Thorodd the priest. 'What marvel,' shouted the heathens, 'if the gods are angry when such words as we have heard are spoken on the Law Mount?' But Snorri, the priest—'the wisest and shrewdest of all those men in Iceland who had not the gift of foresight,' says the Njal's Saga—answered, 'With whom were the gods angry when this very rock on which we are standing was in flames?'—a question to which the others seem to have found no reply.

It is clear, from the whole story of Hjalldi's reception, that Christianity had already well leavened the island. Probably more than half the chief proprietors had either been baptized or had received the *primsignaz*. After the stormy scene at the Mount, therefore, when all had returned to the booths, the Christians entreated Hall of the Side, one of the most powerful of their number, to demand for them a body of laws 'such as Christian men might follow.' The system of ancient law, upon which all Icelandic life and society depended, would no longer hold good for both parties, especially since the direct prohibition of Christianity at the Althing. Hall accordingly, with a 'half-hundred of silver' in his hand, sought Thorgeir, the priest of Lightwater, at this time the 'Speaker of the Law,' and still unbaptized, though evidently not indisposed

towards the new faith ; and persuaded him for that sum (which was apparently his lawful fee) to devise a system of laws which should bear equally on Christians and heathens.\* Thorgeir retired to his booth, where he lay stretched on his bed, with his head covered, for two days and a night—a method of self-concentration which, up to a late period, according to Martin, was usual in Skye and the Western Islands ; where a seer, who wished to exercise his powers, would shut himself into his hut, and there, for two or three days, would lie on the ground in total darkness, wrapped in his plaid, with a great stone resting on his breast.

In the meantime the heathens, reduced almost to despair, determined to make a great sacrifice to the gods, and to offer two human victims from each of the four quarters of Iceland, in the hope that Odin and Thor would then interfere, and prevent Christianity from 'going over all the land.' Gizur and Hjalldi immediately assembled the Christians, and declared that they too would make as solemn a sacrifice, and one with an equal number of victims. The heathens, they said, sacrificed the worst of men, and flung them from rocks and precipices. They would choose the very best and noblest, who should in truth be offerings to Christ—'gifts of victory'—and bind themselves, not indeed to die, but to lead better and worthier lives. Gizur and Hjalldi offered themselves for their own quarter ; Hall of the Side and Thorleif of Krossavik for the eastern ; and of the others, one was Orm, Kodran's son, brother of Thorwald the 'far-farer,' who, when the rest

\* The speaker of the Law was in effect the President of the Althing. 'To him all who were in need of a legal opinion, or of information as to what was and was not law, had a right to turn during the meeting of the Althing.' He was expressly excluded from all share in the executive, but 'had the whole control of the law of the land during the annual fortnight to which the legal existence of the commonwealth was limited.'—*Dasent*, I. lvii., lviii. Hence his great influence on this occasion.

of his father's household were baptized by Bishop Frederick, had refused to accept the new faith, and had withdrawn from the district: he was now baptized at his own request, and was numbered among the Christian 'victims.'

The offerings to Thor and Odin, however, were never made. Thorgeir, the Speaker of the Law, rose at last from his bed, and summoned all who were present at the Thing to assemble about the Law Mount. There he spoke to them at length, and told them what great troubles hung over the land if men would not bind themselves to obey the same laws. There would be ceaseless feuds and manslaughters, and the island would at last become desolate. The only way to avoid these troubles was to frame such new rules as should bear equally on all, and as both parties would agree to observe. 'The Divine Grace,' says the monk of the Olaf's Saga, 'gave so mighty an effect to the words of Thorgeir,' that both heathens and Christians consented to receive as law whatever he should decree: and Thorgeir accordingly pronounced from the summit of the Logberg the ordinances which—so far as outward forms were concerned—made Iceland a Christian country. All, without exception, throughout the island, were to be baptized, and to 'believe in one God.' Heathen temples were everywhere to be destroyed. Whoever was found publicly sacrificing to the ancient deities was to be exiled; but it was allowable for any one to do so in private. The old laws concerning the exposition of infants and the eating of horseflesh were to remain in force,\* together with such

\* Thorgeir's ordinances are thus given in both the *Kristni* and the *Olaf Sagas*, which are followed by Finn Jonsson in his *Historia Eccles. Islandiæ*. The *Njal's Saga* asserts that the exposition of children and the eating of horseflesh were also forbidden, 'unless done by stealth, when they should be blameless' (ch. ci.). The exposition of children—which arose from the legal right of the father, and from the difficulty of supporting a numerous family—prevailed in full force down to the change of faith. The horseflesh forbidden to be eaten was that of the sacrificial animals sacrificed before the heathen altars.

other customs as were not openly opposed to Christianity. 'Thorgeir,' says the *Njal's Saga*, 'then uttered the law as to keeping the Lord's-day and fast-days, Yule-tide and Easter, and all the greatest high-days and holidays.'

Such was the new faith to which the Icelanders bound themselves at the persuasion of Thorgeir, the Speaker of the Law. It was confessedly a compromise: Thorgeir, it must be remembered, was himself a heathen; and the greater part of those who now received baptism regarded it, in all probability, much as the 'primsignaz' had hitherto been looked upon, only as a ceremony which prevented the breaking up of the commonwealth. But heathenism received a fatal blow; although it was, no doubt, long before its traces ceased to be distinctly recognizable—

'Ere, from Bethabara northward, heavenly truth,  
With even steps winning her difficult way,  
Transferred their rude faith perfected and pure.' \*

'Through the grace and mercy of the Lord,' says the *Olaf's Saga*, those heathen practices which were now permitted—the secret worship of the old gods, the exposition of infants, and the use of horseflesh—disappeared within a few winters. But it was not so easy to displace the inner spirit of the old creed of the Northmen. Most of the heathens present at the *Althing* were baptized in the lake of *Thingvalla*: but the plunge into cold water was in general so greatly dreaded, that permission was given to use the hot springs of *Reykiadal* and *Langardal* as baptismal 'fonts.' It was on the 24th of June, the festival of St. John the Baptist—when, according to the belief of the heathen North, the hosts of the unseen world were especially powerful—in the year 1000, that Christianity was 'brought into the law' of Iceland; and within a very short time afterwards nearly all the inhabitants of the island had been baptized. King *Olaf Tryggvison* received the news

\* Coleridge.

of the conversion of Iceland just as he was leaving Nidaros in his famous ship the 'Long Worm,' on the expedition which ended in the great battle of Svoldr, during which, on the 9th of September in the same year, Olaf, like the Arthur of romance, disappeared mysteriously from the sight of men. During the five years for which he had been King of Norway, he had succeeded in introducing Christianity—rudely, but efficiently as a beginning—throughout his own country, in the Orkneys, in the Feroe Islands, in Iceland, and among the Scandinavian colonists in Greenland. Before leaving Nidaros he set free the hostages whom he had detained on Hjallti's departure. Kiartan, the chief of them, is recorded as having been the first Icelander who kept the Lenten fast by abstaining altogether from flesh meat.

For the character of the Christianity now adopted in Iceland—which, with the ruder and fiercer minds, was little more than a thin veil thrown over their original heathenism—we have no better witness than the Njal's Saga. The first part of the story ends, as we have seen, with the death of Gunnar. The change of faith is then briefly recorded; and the Saga proceeds to detail the events which brought about the burning of Njal—the burning itself, and the ends of the several burners. Hence the sharply drawn characters in this second part appear under the influence of the new faith, the varying effect of which on different natures is distinctly marked. The fierce spirit of revenge, one of the strongest instincts with the heathen Northmen, was but little checked. Here, for example, is the story of Amund the blind, which probably received some monastic touches before taking the form in which it is told in the Njala, but which is sufficiently suggestive. It occurred nine years after Christianity was 'brought into the law.' Lyting of Samstede had killed Hanskuld, Njal's son, father of Amund, who came soon afterwards to the local 'Thing' of his district.

'He made men lead him about among the booths, and so he came to the booth inside which was Lyting of Samstede. He made them lead him into the booth till he came before Lyting.

"Is Lyting of Samstede here?" he asked.

"What dost thou want?" says Lyting.

"I want to know," says Amund, "what atonement thou wilt pay me for my father. I am base-born, and I have touched no fine."

"I have atoned for the slaying of thy father," says Lyting, "with a full price, and thy father's father and thy father's brothers took the money. . . ."

"I ask not," says Amund, "as to thy having paid an atonement to them. I know that ye two are now friends; but I ask this, What atonement thou wilt pay to me?"

"None at all," says Lyting.

"I cannot see," says Amund, "how thou canst have right before God, when thou hast stricken me so near the heart; but all I can say is, that if I were blessed with the sight of both my eyes, I would have either a money fine for my father, or revenge man for man; and so may God judge between us."

'After that he went out; but when he came to the door of the booth he turned short round towards the inside. Then his eyes were opened, and he said,—

"Praised be the Lord! Now I see what his will is!"

'With that he ran straight into the booth until he comes before Lyting, and smites him with an axe on the head, so that it sank in up to the hammer, and gives the axe a pull towards him.

'Lyting fell forward, and was dead at once. Amund goes out to the door of the booth; and when he got to the very same spot on which he had stood when his eyes were opened, lo! they were shut again, and he was blind all his life after.

'Then he made them lead him to Njal and his sons, and he told them of Lyting's slaying.

"Thou mayst not be blamed for this," says Njal, "for such things are settled by a higher power; but it is worth while to take warning from such events, lest we cut any short who have such near claims as Amund had."

That Christianity had by this time well established itself, is evident from the words of Mord, the 'Iago' of the Njal's Saga, to his father, Valgard 'the guileful,' who returned to Iceland, still a heathen, in 1009—the year of Lyting's death :—

"I would, father," said Mord, "that thou wouldst take on thee the new faith. Thou art an old man."



“I will not do that,” says Valgard; “I would rather that thou shouldst cast off the faith, and see what follows then.”

‘Mord said he would not do that. Valgard broke crosses before Mord’s face, and all holy tokens. A little after, Valgard took a sickness, and breathed his last, and was laid in a cairn by Hof.’

It was through Mord’s cunning slander that Skarphedinn and the other sons of Njal were led on to the murder of Hanskuld, Njal’s foster-son—the ‘sweetest light of his eyes’—and one to whom, as to Njal himself, Christianity seems to have come as something more than a form. Hanskuld, the priest of Whiteness (the title and the influence still remained, although the temples had been destroyed), was attacked in the early morning, as with his corn-sieve in one hand, and his sword in the other, he was ‘sowing the corn as he went’ :—

‘. . . Skarphedinn and his band had agreed that they would all give him a wound. Skarphedinn sprang up from behind the fence; but when Hanskuld saw him, he wanted to turn away. Then Skarphedinn ran up to him, and said,—

“Don’t try to turn on thy heel, Whiteness Priest,” and hews at him; and the blow came on his head, and he fell on his knees. Hanskuld said these words when he fell,—

“God help me, and forgive you!”

This murder sealed the fate of Njal and of all his family. Hanskuld had been killed wearing a cloak which had been given him by Flosi, the uncle of Hanskuld’s wife Hildegunna. When Flosi came to her house after the murder, Hildegunna took this cloak out of her chest, where she had kept it, and

‘. . . threw the cloak over Flosi, and the gore rattled down all over him.

‘Then she spoke and said,—

“This cloak, Flosi, thou gavest to Hanskuld, and now I will give it back to thee: he was slain in it, and I call God and all good men to witness that I adjure thee, by all the might of thy Christ, and by thy manhood and bravery, to take vengeance for all those wounds which he had on his dead body, or else to be called every man’s dastard.”

Against his will, Flosi was thus drawn into the plot against Njal; the award for the murder was set aside at the Thing;

and at a great meeting of friends and followers, summoned by Flosi in the 'Almannagja'—the Great Rift—it was determined to make an attack on the house of Bergthorsknoll, and to kill all who were in it. The story of the burning develops Njal's character so well, and the accidental illustrations of the new faith are so curious, that it must not be passed by hastily.

Flosi, when the appointed time had come (on a Sunday in August 1011), assembled at Swinefell 'all his men who had promised him help and company,' and

'made them say prayers betimes on the Lord's day, and afterwards they sat down to meat. He spoke to his household, and told them what work each was to do while he was away. After that he went to his horses. . . . They rode west to Woodcombe, and came to Kirkby. Flosi then bade all men to come into the church and pray to God, and men did so.'

Flosi's Christianity was at least not behind that of certain Northern pirates in the sixteenth century, who captured a priest in order that they might have service duly said on board their vessel every Sunday. Throughout, however, he seems to have been acting half-unwillingly. The whole band of 'burners,' one hundred and twenty in number, assembled at the 'ridge of the Three-corner,' and thence came down upon Bergthorsknoll, where grave portents had appeared, ominous of coming trouble, and where Njal, the 'foresighted man,' had long before predicted the manner of his death. On the approach of the band, Njal, his nine sons, Kari his son-in-law, and all the serving-men, who at first stood 'in array to meet them in the yard,' retired into the house, and barricaded it. Many of Flosi's men were killed by spears flung from the window-slits; and at last he said,—

"We have already gotten great manscathe. . . . It is now clear that we shall never master them with weapons. . . . There are but two choices left, and neither of them good. One is to turn away, and that is our death; the other, to set fire to the house, and burn them inside it; and that is a deed which we shall have to answer

for heavily before God, since we are Christian men ourselves ; but still we must take to that counsel."

' Now they took fire and made a great pile before the doors. Then Skarphedinn said,—

" "What, lads ! are ye lighting a fire, or are ye taking to cooking ?"

" "So shall it be," answered Grani Gunnar's son, "and thou shalt not need to be better done."

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' Then the women threw whey on the fire, and quenched it as fast as they lit it . . . . and then . . . . they took a vetch-stack that stood above the house, and set fire to it, and they who were inside were not aware of it till the whole hall was ablaze over their heads.

' Then Flosi and his men made a great pile before each of the doors, and then the women-folk who were inside began to weep and to wail.

' Njal spoke to them, and said, "Keep up your hearts, nor utter shrieks, for this is but a passing storm, and it will be long before ye have another such ; and put your faith in God, and believe that he is so merciful that he will not let us burn both in this world and the next."

' Such words of comfort had he for them all, and others still more strong.

' Now the whole house began to blaze. Then Njal went to the door, and said,—

" "Is Flosi so near that he can hear my voice ?"

' Flosi said that he could hear it.

" "Wilt thou," said Njal, "take an atonement from my sons, or allow any men to go out ?"

" "I will not," answers Flosi, "take any atonement from thy sons, and now our dealings shall come to an end once for all, and I will not stir from this spot till they are all dead ; but I will allow the women and children and house-carles to go out."

The women accordingly—all except Bergthora, the aged wife of Njal—went out ; and with them went Helgi, Njal's son, wrapped in a woman's cloak. He was recognised, however, and killed by Flosi.

' Then Flosi went to the door, and called out to Njal, and said he would speak with him and Bergthora.

' Now Njal does so, and Flosi said,—

" "I will offer thee, Master Njal, leave to go out, for it is unworthy that thou shouldst burn indoors."

" "I will not go out," said Njal, "for I am an old man, and little fitted to avenge my sons ; but I will not live in shame."

The great duty of revenge was still a principle of life, even with so gentle-minded and thoughtful a convert as Njal.

‘Then Flosi said to Bergthora, -

“Come thou out, housewife, for I will for no sake burn thee indoors.”

“I was given away to Njal young,” said Bergthora, “and I have promised him this, that we would both share the same fate.”

‘After that they both went back into the house.

“What counsel shall we now take?” said Bergthora.

“We will go to our bed,” says Njal, “and lay us down. I have long been eager for rest.”

‘Then she said to the boy Thord, Kari’s son,—

“Thee will I take out, and thou shalt not burn in here.”

“Thou hast promised me this, grandmother,” says the boy, “that we should never part so long as I wished to be with thee; but methinks it is much better to die with thee and Njal than to live after you.”

‘Then she bore the boy to her bed, and Njal spoke to his steward and said,—

“Now shalt thou see where we lay us down, and how I lay us out; for I mean not to stir an inch hence, whether reek or burning smart me, and so thou wilt be able to guess where to look for our bones.”

‘He said he would do so.

‘There had been an ox slaughtered, and the hide lay there. Njal told the steward to spread the hide over them, and he did so.

‘So there they lay down both of them in their bed, and put the boy between them. Then they signed themselves and the boy with the cross, and gave over their souls into God’s hand, and that was the last word that men heard them utter.

‘Then the steward took the hide, and spread it over them, and went out afterwards.’

Meanwhile the house burnt, and all perished who were still within it, with the exception of Kari, who, with his clothes and his hair all ablaze, threw himself down from the roof, and ‘so crept along with the smoke.’ He ran till he came to a stream, in which he flung himself, and so ‘quenched the fire on him.’ Mr. Metcalfe tells us that the place, now a small pit in the swamp below Bergthorsknoll, is still pointed out, as ‘Karitiörn,’ the tarn of Kari. Flosi and his band stayed by the fire until it was broad daylight. Then they rode off together. ‘Flosi never spoke about the

deed, but no fear was found in him, and he was at home the whole winter till Yule was over.'

Meanwhile Kari, who had escaped, sought Hjalldi, Skeggi's son—the same whom we already know as the successful champion of the new faith at the Althing.

'Kari bade Hjalldi to go and search for Njal's bones, "for all will believe in what thou sayest and thinkest about them."

'Hjalldi said he would be most willing to bear Njal's bones to church; so they rode thence, fifteen men. . . . At last . . . they had one hundred men, reckoning Njal's neighbours.

'Then they came to Bergthorsknoll at midday. Hjalldi asked Kari under what part of the house Njal might be lying, but Kari showed them to the spot, and there there was a great heap of ashes to dig away. There they found the hide underneath, and it was as though it were shrivelled with the fire. They raised up the hide, and, lo! they were unburnt under it. All praised God for that, and thought it was a great token.

'Njal was borne out, and so was Bergthora; and then all men went to see their bodies.

'Then Hjalldi said, "What like look to you these bodies?"

'They answered, "We will wait for thy utterance."

'Then Hjalldi said, "I shall speak what I say with all freedom of speech. The body of Bergthora looks as it was likely she would look, and still fair: but Njal's body and visage seem to me so bright that I have never seen any dead man's body so bright as this."

'They all said they thought so too.'

In all, the bones of nine persons were discovered; all of which were solemnly conveyed to the churchyard and interred. During the heathen period interments had been made in cairns, not far from the dwelling. But immediately after the reception of Christianity, churches, with the consecrated enclosure about them, were built in different parts of the island, and in spite of the difficulty of conveying the dead across flooded rivers and over wild mountain ridges, they were now carefully laid to rest under the shadow of the holy walls. These, as they still are for the most part throughout Iceland, were of wood, either from the drift-logs brought to the coast by the Gulf-stream, or of pine and oak sent for this express purpose from Norway and Great Britain. They

were roofed with turf. The churches were nowhere large—although the great landowners, no doubt, did their best for them, since they believed that as many souls would be saved by their means as the church they built could contain. In form they were probably long parallelograms, resembling the stone church of which the ruins have been found on the coast of Greenland. For a certain time after consecration these first churches were said to be ‘in albis,’ like men after baptism. An early Icelandic name for the altar, ‘Paxspialld’—the ‘table of peace’—is not apparently found elsewhere. It is eminently suggestive of what appeared to the first converts one of the greatest distinctions between the old faith and the new—the duty of abandoning revenge. Even Njal, as we have just seen, chose to die rather than to live without the power of avenging the loss of his sons. A truer Christian spirit appears in Hall of the Side, Thangbrand’s earliest convert, who, when his son Ljot had been killed in a fight at the Althing, would demand no ‘blood-wite’ for him. ‘I will put no price on my son,’ he said, ‘and yet will come forward and grant both pledges and peace to those who are my adversaries.’ A great ‘hum in his favour followed,’ we are told, ‘and all praised his gentleness and good will,’ which few however were as yet found ready to imitate. But the ‘peace of the Church’ made a great step under Gizur, the second bishop of Skalholt, who persuaded the Icelanders to appear without their weapons at the Althing.

All those who had been present at the burning of Njal were exiled at the next Althing. Flosi himself was banished for three years, and undertook a pilgrimage to Rome. Many of his followers sailed from Iceland with him. Their ship was wrecked on the Orkneys, where Flosi was made Earl Sigurd’s henchman, ‘and soon won his way to great love with the Earl.’ At Yuletide, Sigtrygg ‘of the silken beard,’ King of the Northmen settled in Ireland, came to seek Earl

Sigurd's help in a struggle with the famous Over-king of Ireland, Brian Boroimhe—'Brian of the Tribute.' Sigurd consented to assist him, and Flosi offered to join the expedition, but the Earl would not permit him to go, 'since he had his pilgrimage to fulfil.' Flosi then offered fifteen men of his band, whom the Earl accepted. In this manner the first race of Icelandic converts was represented in 'Brian's Battle,' where, in Mr. Dasent's words, 'the old and new faith met in the lists, face to face, for their last struggle.'

'King Sigtrygg's stronghold was the fort at Dublin, near the bridge, and thither by Palm Sunday the whole heathen host had met; but Brian, warned in time by Ospak, was not only ready to meet them, should they fall upon him, but ready to march against and fall upon them. He, too, on Palm Sunday had gathered the Christian host in his leaguer at Clontarf; and so the two armies lay watching one another through Passion week. Brodir,' (a famous Viking in the following of Sigurd of Orkney, 'who had been a Christian man and a mass-deacon by consecration, but had thrown off his faith, and become God's dastard, and now worshipped heathen fiends,') 'skilled in sorcery, betook himself to his black arts, and from the first got little comfort either for himself or his brothers in arms. If the battle were fought before Good Friday, the heathen host would be utterly routed, and lose its chiefs; but if the struggle were delayed till Good Friday, then King Brian would fall, but still win the day. On Good Friday, then, which fell in 1014 on the 18th of April, the heathen made up their minds to fight; and that nothing might be wanting to stamp the struggle with the seal of the ancient faith, Odin himself, as the legend darkly hints, rode up, as we are told in many like stories, on an apple-grey horse, holding a halbert in his hand, and held a council of war with Kormlada, King Sigtrygg, and the other chiefs; one of the last appearances of the god of battles struggling with the fate which now at last had overtaken him, and helping his own on the very eve of battle with his comfort and advice. Nor were other tokens wanting. In Iceland itself, at Swinefell, where Flosi and the burners had so long stayed, blood burst out on the priest's vestments on Good Friday; and at Thvattwater, Hall's abode, on the same day, the priest saw an abyss open hard by the altar as he sang mass, in which were strange and awful things. The northern mind plainly long looked on Brian's battle as a blow that went home to the heart of many a household. In Caithness, and in other parts of the west, the Valkyries, Odin's corse-choosing maidens, were seen, twelve of them riding together, dismounting, entering a bower, setting up their mystic loom, and

there weaving out of the entrails of men, with swords for their shuttles, that grim Woof of War, which is at once one of the last, as it is one of the grandest flights of the Scandinavian Swan-maiden, ere she winged her way for ever from the world, together with the faith to which she and that wild strain of melody belonged.\*

This is the famous Ode which was translated by Gray from Bartholin's Latin version. As given in the *Njal's Saga*, the 'Woof' has been admirably rendered by Mr. Dasent.

The issue of the battle was as Brodir had foreseen. He himself killed King Brian, but was taken and tortured to death in revenge. One passage from the description of the fight in the *Saga* is remarkable. The account was probably brought back to Iceland by Thorstein, Hall of the Side's son, who figures in it :—

'Then Earl Sigurd called on Thorstein, the son of Hall of the Side, to bear his banner ; and Thorstein was just about to lift the banner, but then Asmund the White said—

"Don't bear the banner ; for all they who bear it get their death."

"Hrafn the Red !" called out Earl Sigurd ; "bear thou the banner."

"Bear thine own devil thyself," answered Hrafn.

'Then the Earl said—

"'Tis fittest that the beggar should bear the bag ;" and with that he took the banner from the staff, and put it under his cloak.

'A little after Asmund the White was slain, and then the Earl was pierced through with a spear. . . .

'Then flight broke out throughout all the host.

'Thorstein, Hall of the Side's son, stood still while all the others fled, and tied his shoe-string. Then Kerthialfad asked why he ran not as the others.

"Because," said Thorstein, "I can't get home to-night, since I am at home out in Iceland."

'Kerthialfad gave him peace.

'Hrafn the Red was chased out into a certain river ; he thought he saw there the pains of hell down below him, and he thought the devils wanted to drag him to them.

'Then Hrafn said—

"Thy dog, Apostle Peter, hath run twice to Rome, and he would run the third time if thou gavest him leave."

'Then the devils let him loose, and Hrafn got across the river.'

\* *Story of Burnt Njal*, vol. i., Introd. exciv.-vi.



The result of Brian's battle was thus complete victory for neither side. Christianity had still a long course to run before its teaching could shine out in its true purity ; and in Iceland, as elsewhere throughout the North, the old faith underlay the new, chequering it with strange reflections ; a mingled creed, as fantastic in its outlines as the wild lights and shadows that chase each other along the Icelander's own rough hill-sides.

The first Icelandic bishop was Isleif, son of Gizur the White, Hjalld's companion on the Law Mount. He had been educated for the priesthood at Erfurth, in Thuringia, one of the great schools of the time, and brought back to his own country a wide reputation for learning. John, the first bishop of Holar, who was brought up by him, used to say, whenever he heard of those who were goodly to look upon, or of great skill in any way, 'Such was Isleif the bishop, my foster-father, the goodliest and most skilful of men.' His son Gizur succeeded him, and established the see at Skalholt. A second Icelandic bishopric, for the northern division of the island, was soon afterwards established at Holar, with a great-grandson of Hall of the Side for its first bishop. Two of the leaders who had been most active in 'bringing Christianity into the law' were thus represented in the first chiefs of the National Church.

Eccelesiology is by no means a strong point with the most recent Icelandic tourists, and their descriptions give us but vague ideas of the present state of the churches throughout the island, or of their antiquity and architectural character. According to Mr. Metcalfe, indeed, there is but little to say about them. They are almost all new, and of wood ; 'they don't look like churches. They might be so many wooden warehouses, with their square-headed windows and utter want of architecture.' Such, he tells us, is the present church of Thingvalla, which occupies the site of the old heathen temple,

near the mouth of the Oxara river. The materials for the first church here, together with a great bell, were sent from Norway by St. Olaf. This building was destroyed by a tempest; and a second, the timber for which was the offering of the Norwegian King Harald Sigurdson, shared the same fate during the Althing of 1118, on the death-day of Bishop Gizur. The most interesting relic of antiquity connected with the church of Thingvalla is a large unhewn stone, of oblong shape, near the church door, 'on which is scored the exact ell measure of Iceland. It formerly stood in the church wall of the ancient church, and has doubtless been witness to many a shrewd bargain at the national meeting, when piles of cloth would exchange hands; and, in case of dispute about the quantity, it would be made use of as an impartial referee.'\*

Another site in the Thingfield has a still higher interest than that of the church. The two great crosses brought to Iceland by Gizur and Hjallti, and borne before them on the Law Mount, were afterwards fixed in the rock, where they remained for some centuries. The place of that which measured the height of Olaf Tryggvison is still pointed out as the 'Cleft of the Cross.'

The two ancient cathedrals of Iceland have altogether fallen from their high estate.

'Skalholt, that is the single farm-house now representing the place, stands on an eminence just in the fork formed by the junction of the Bruará and Hvítá, and overshadowed on the south by the tall Vordufell. As may at once be perceived, the site of the episcopal residence was chosen with great tact and forethought. In the first place, there was abundance of grass in the fertile Bishopstunga to fatten the beeves and palfreys of the bishops. And as for fish, there were waters enough around to supply the extensive demand, and hot springs to cook them when caught, or, if requisite, to wash the ecclesiastics. But what was of great importance, Skalholt was secure against hostile surprise on every side but the north-east, in consequence of the river-

\* *Oxonian in Iceland.*

barriers about it. . . . Very little now remains to show the former importance of the place. The present little church is merely a chapel of ease. Grass-grown mounds to the south-west of this edifice indicate the site of extensive ecclesiastical buildings. Yonder, an enclosure marks the large episcopal garden. There are also the foundations of a prayer-house to the east of the church, measuring twelve paces long and six wide.\*

The ancient church contained the relics of St. Thorlak, one of the great patron saints of Iceland, who died bishop of Skalholt in 1193, and whose shrine, rich in gold and jewels, was carried round the church on his festival. After the skull had crumbled into dust, Bishop Wilkin, at the end of the fourteenth century, is said to have replaced it with a large cocoa-nut shell which had been thrown ashore by the Gulf-stream. St. Thorlak was honoured throughout the North, but was never solemnly canonized. 'One in England,' says the legend, 'mocking him, held up to his image a turf, and said, "Wilt thou this turf? thou art of Iceland;" whereupon his hand dried up, and so continued until he entreated St. Thorlak, and it was restored.'†

\* *Oxonian in Iceland.*

† F. Johannæus, *Hist. Eccles. Islandiæ*, i. 299.



V.

THE GREAT SHRINES OF ENGLAND.\*

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THE difference in the circumstances under which the English settlements in Britain were first made, and the first northern conquerors established themselves in Gaul, is reflected in the whole later history of each country. In Britain the earlier population was either gradually driven to the remoter corners of the island, or (to all appearance) was entirely extinguished. At any rate, no Brito-Roman influence is traceable in the polity or habits of thought of the heathen colonists. But in Gaul, and in the other southern countries to which Teutons found their way, they encountered an old Roman civilization far more perfect and widely spread than any that had existed in Britain, and which, unlike that of Britain, was still comparatively unbroken. The conquerors themselves were conquered by it. They accepted Christianity from the Romanized Bishops of the Gallic cities; and although they crossed the Rhine as heathens, they were nowhere left, as in Britain, without the spectacle of great Christian churches and services before they learnt themselves to adore what they had burned, and to burn what they had adored. One marked result of this difference appears in the nationality of the saints chiefly revered in the two countries. The great saints of the Gallic provinces are for the most part Romans or Romanized provincials. St. Remigius of Rheims, St. Martin of Tours, and St. Hilary of Arles, represented the clergy whom the Frankish conquerors found

\* *Quarterly Review*, July, 1872.

presiding over the cities of which they took possession, and from whom they received the Christian faith. In Gaul no saint of Teutonic origin ever attained equal distinction. But in England it is quite different. Here the great national saints are Englishmen and Englishwomen,—St. Edmund, St. Cuthbert, St. Etheldreda. British saints, indeed, like David of Menevia, kept their hold in Wales and in Cornwall; but there the races were not mingled, and St. Alban alone, the so-called protomartyr of Britain, occupies a position at all analogous to that of the Gallic saints. Like them he belonged to the older race, but received his greatest honours from the new-comers.

It is hardly peculiar to England, but is perhaps a necessary result of the social conditions under which Christianity was embraced by the northern races, that the greater number of persons revered as saints in this country before the Norman Conquest were of royal or of noble birth. The origin of St. Cuthbert is doubtful; but so impressed were the early hagiologists with the belief that a 'regia origo' was a fitting accompaniment of saintship, that a descent from certain Irish kings was duly discovered for him.\* This descent is at least as doubtful as that of St. Rumold, the patron of Mechlin,—son, according to his legend, of a king of Scotland; on which account the archbishops of Mechlin still quarter the lion of Scotland with the arms assigned to their see.† Welsh genealogists went still farther; and whilst they asserted the royal descent of St. David and St. Cadoc, they traced them back, on the female side, to a sister

\* An inscription placed by Prior Wessington under an image of St. Cuthbert in Durham Cathedral described him as 'natione Hibernicus, regis parentibus ortus.' (Raine's *St. Cuthbert*, p. 15, note.) But Bede knew nothing of this descent.

† Or at any rate did so until very lately. The shield of Scotland is to be seen quartered with the arms of many archbishops, on their tombs in the cathedral.

or a cousin of the Blessed Virgin.\* Much strong tribal and local feeling was thus necessarily mixed with the reverence paid to the religious character. Each English kingdom possessed its own saints, more honoured in their own district than in other parts of the country, and the greater part of them little recognized beyond the sea. It was this intensely national character of the English saints which caused Lanfranc, after the Conquest, to question their claims to the honours they had up to that time received.† In his hesitation there is something of the hardness and perhaps of the political spirit of a conqueror; but nothing indicates more clearly the strong English feeling with which the Church of our forefathers was penetrated. Nor did this national feeling by any means cease with the Conquest. The Confessor at Westminster and Bishop Wulfstan at Worcester were both received by popular consent into the company of saints long before the eleventh century had expired, and long before their final canonization. It is impossible to follow Thierry in regarding St. Thomas of Canterbury as the representative of the English people in struggle with an 'alien' king; but it is sufficiently clear that after his martyrdom he was looked upon as a true Englishman. The last saint recognized in this country before the Reformation was St. Thomas Cantilupe of Hereford,—a member of that noble family which, after Normans and English had become fused into one people, assisted in the struggle against another foreign domination, and in the person of William Cantilupe, Bishop of Worcester, blessed the host of the barons before they rose in arms to fight at Lewes and Evesham. And the English feeling which recog-

\* *Lives of the Cambro-British Saints* (Welsh MSS. Society), pp. 378—402. The biographers of St. Patrick constructed a genealogy, in which they traced his descent from Brutus of Troy, 'a quo sunt Britanni nominati.'—Todd's *St. Patrick*, p. 353.

† Eadmer, *Vita Anselmi*; quoted by Freeman, *Norm. Conquest*, vol. iv. p. 442. Lanfranc consulted Anselm, who removed his prejudices.

nized the national spirit of the Cantilupes, led also to the honouring as saints of such great leaders as Simon of Montfort and Earl Thomas of Lancaster, in the first instance not perhaps altogether unworthily, in the second with more questionable right. But both 'fought for England' and for the English people. Sainly honours and the ascription of miracles at his tomb were the greatest distinction that could be paid after death; and in those ages popular love and regret took that form almost naturally. It will be well, however, before entering farther on this subject, to pass in somewhat rapid review the great shrines of England as they existed toward the middle of the fifteenth century, when their number had long been completed, and before the signs of the coming religious change had become too marked to be disregarded. The fashion of pilgrimages was then perhaps at its height, and the English shrines, throughout the country, stood untouched and unrivalled in their magnificence and stores of wealth.

We will suppose that a pilgrim bound to visit '*sanctorum Anglicanæ religionis reliquias et loca venerabilia*'—like that Armenian archbishop who in the year 1228 was entertained in the hospitable Abbey of St. Alban's, and there edified the monks with the history of the Wandering Jew\*—has landed at Bristol, a port from which pilgrims frequently sailed for Compostella, and which may well have been a place of arrival for strangers whose errands were of similar nature. Such a pilgrim would find the country south of the Bristol Channel—Somersetshire, Devon, and Cornwall—without any shrine of the first importance; though he would of course turn southward to visit the green hills of Glastonbury, a 'station' regarded as of great sanctity, rather from the accumulation of supposed relics than from the reputation of any one great tomb. No English church claimed more unhesitatingly the posses-

\* Matt. Paris, ad. ann. 1228, p. 296 (ed. Wats.)



sion of so many and so great relics, and none with so little reason. Yet Glastonbury had her authentic tombs, which an Englishman, at least, might well venerate—setting aside the remains of the legendary Arthur and his Queen Guinevere, which after their ‘invention,’ in the reign of Richard I., found their final resting-place in a sepulchre before the high altar.\* On the north side of the British king reposed the actual remains of Edmund the Elder—the ‘magnificent;’ on the south, those of his namesake and descendant, the noble Edmund Ironside; and behind the presbytery, in a separate chapel, lay Edgar the ‘peaceful’—sainted, if never canonized.† Before his tomb the pilgrim might kneel; but his special devotion at Glastonbury would be claimed by St. Joseph of Arimathea, St. Dunstan, St. Gildas, St. Patrick, and others, whose relics seem to have been displayed in their several chapels. There are few sites in England more remarkable or more interesting than Glastonbury—the ‘Isle of Avalon,’ which was the common sanctuary of Briton and of Englishman, and which alone among the older British churches (without the border of what is now Wales) survived the storm of the English Conquest. But Glastonbury was for a considerable period within the limits of ‘West Wales;’ and it was the long continuance of this British kingdom—the powerful kingdom of Damnonia—which not only gave to Glastonbury her peculiar character, but materially affected the whole of the western peninsula. We may thus account for the absence of any great English shrine in that district. Exeter possessed none. Crediton, the first seat of the bishopric, was without a shrine—although the deep religious fervour of the earlier English settlers is in none more con-

\* Leland saw the tomb there. The bones of King Arthur, of gigantic size, were shown to Edward I. and his queen in 1276. The skulls of Arthur and Guinevere were kept outside the tomb, ‘for the devotion of the people.’

† Willis’s *Architectural History of Glastonbury Abbey*, p. 33.



spicuous than in St. Boniface, the 'Apostle of Germany,' born, according to universal belief, and the ancient tradition of the country, at Crediton, late in the seventh century. But all this country was for some centuries a sort of borderland from which the Britons were gradually driven westward; and as we advance farther west we find that such saints as were chiefly if not exclusively revered were of British origin, more or less connected with Wales and Armorica. In the church of the Benedictines at Tavistock, which stood near the limit finally assigned by Athelstan to the Britons, stood the splendid shrine of St. Rumon, a Cornish bishop of whom nothing but the name is known, whose relics were obtained for the abbey by Ordulf the giant, son of the founder, Earl Ordgar. Tavistock was an English foundation, and her Cornish tutelary saint (the abbey was dedicated in the names of St. Rumon and of the Blessed Virgin) affords a curious proof of the mixture of races in this district. In Cornwall itself, although the Augustinians of Bodmin possessed the shrine of St. Petroc, and although the names of saints are numerous, there was but one place of pilgrimage of great importance—St. Michael's Mount—visited in honour of the Archangel, who is said to have appeared to certain hermits on the crags—

'The great vision of the guarded Mount'

of Lycidas. The Cornish St. Michael's became a cell to the great Abbey of St. Michael 'in periculo maris,' on the opposite coast of Normandy. The devotion paid here to the Archangel is not less distinctly of British character than if the saint of the Mount had been St. David or St. Teilo. Ninety-four churches and chapels, the 'Llanfihangels' so frequently met with, are dedicated to his honour in different parts of Wales.\*

\* Rees' *Essay on the Welsh Saints*, p. 40. There are in Wales 143

Returning to Bristol, and crossing the mouth of the Severn, the pilgrim, journeying along the ancient 'Via Julia,' would find his way to St. David's, long regarded as the most sacred spot in Wales, and still almost unrivalled in its attraction for the antiquary and the lover of untrammelled nature. No British coast is grander, and nowhere else are noble architecture and a wild rocky landscape brought into such close relationship—each heightening the other's interest. In the great cathedral, 'Ty Ddewi,' the 'house of David,' as it was called, rested the shrine of the patron of Wales—the saint who, besides his labours in his own country, helped to regulate the Irish Church of the sixth century, and who influenced, more perhaps than is generally suspected, the lives and teaching of the missionaries who found their way from Iona to the 'regions of the Picts,' and to the kingdoms of English Northumbria.\* Difficult of access and remotely placed, it was not perhaps without reason that the old verse pronounced two pilgrimages to St. David's equal in merit to one made to Rome—

'Meneviam pete bis, Romam adire si vis,—  
Æqua merces tibi redditur hic et ibi.  
Roma semel quantum dat bis Menevia tantum.'

The shrine was visited and revered by the Conqueror, by Henry II., and by Edward I.; and it was while resting here, before embarking for Ireland, that Henry II. is said to have learnt from a Welsh bard the position of King Arthur's

churches dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and 53 to St. David. These, with the Archangel Michael, are the saints chiefly honoured.

\* All these missionaries belonged to what is called the 'second order' of Irish saints (see Todd's *St. Patrick*, p. 88, note). They 'do not appear to have had any connection with Armagh, or the institutions of St. Patrick (ib. p. 95); but had received a Mass or Liturgy from St. David. The lives of nearly all these Irish saints bring them to Menevia, where they join the 'familia' of St. David.—Todd's *St. Patrick*, p. 100; Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils and Eccles. Documents*, i. pp. 115, 116.

tomb at Glastonbury—thus leading to the famous ‘invention of his remains.

The list of true Welsh saints is somewhat long, but not one attained the celebrity or the distinction of St. David—the only Welsh or Cornish saint whose name appears in the calendars of the Western Church. Leaving Wales, therefore, and turning northward from Bristol, our first resting-place is Gloucester, where the Benedictines guarded in their magnificent church the tomb of Edward II.—beyond all doubt no saintly shrine, and only recommended as a place of pilgrimage by the ‘divinity that doth hedge a king,’ and by the circumstances of the unhappy Edward’s death. It is in fact a curious and unusual example of the homage which, as has before been mentioned, was paid at certain ‘political’ shrines. Edward II. had few merits, and an overpowering weight of demerits. But after the erection of his superb tomb by his young son Edward III. pilgrims flocked to it in such numbers that, as it was asserted, the oblations made at it within fifty years would have sufficed to build the whole church anew. It was thought that offerings at the king’s tomb availed to turn aside the Divine anger from the nation. Edward III. himself, when once in danger of shipwreck, vowed to present a golden ship (*navicula*—probably a vessel for incense) at his father’s shrine. The Black Prince offered a crucifix containing a portion of the holy cross; and the rich presents of many princes and nobles hung round the tomb, which, with its canopy rising in sheaves of tabernacle work, is still one of the chief glories of the noble church of Gloucester. No similar offerings were ever made at the tomb of King John in the choir of Worcester. ‘No man cried God bless him.’ In the hour of his death at Newark (October 16, 1216) he ‘commended his body and soul to St. Wulfstan,’ the last great English saint who had been canonized (by Innocent III. in 1203), and before whose tomb the king had



more than once knelt in such devotion as was possible with him. The shrines of St. Wulfstan and St. Oswald stood one on either side of the high altar. In front and between them was the tomb of King John—a position which, it was asserted, fulfilled a prophecy of Merlin, 'et inter sanctos collocabitur.' St. Wulfstan, 'vir magnæ pietatis et columbinæ simplicitatis,' in the words of William of Malmesbury, was Bishop of Worcester before, during, and after the Norman Conquest. It is of him that the story is told, how, when called upon by Lanfranc to resign his see and to deliver up his pastoral staff, he refused to do so unless to the Confessor, from whom he had received it. He laid it accordingly on the Confessor's tomb, which opened and enclosed it. No one could withdraw it but Wulfstan himself, who was of course permitted to retain his see.\* St. Oswald, an earlier Bishop of Worcester, was the friend and (in his support of the monks against the regular clergy) the coadjutor of Dunstan. He was the founder of the monastery and the builder of the first great church at Worcester.

At Worcester we are in the old province of the Hwiccas, a portion of the great Mercian kingdom. From this place, still keeping within the Mercian limits, the pilgrim might turn south-west to Hereford. There, in the beautiful transept of the cathedral, stood the shrine of St. Thomas of Cantilupe, at the translation of whose relics Edward II. was present in 1286, although the saint himself was not formally canonized until 1320. St. Thomas, Bishop of Hereford between the years 1275 and 1282, was, as has already been said, the last Englishman recognized as a saint before the Reformation.†

\* Matt. Paris, p. 288 (ed. Wats.). This story is first told by Ailred of Rievaulx, writing in the next century. A very interesting account of the 'Life and Times of St. Wulfstan,' by the Dean of Chichester, will be found in the 20th volume of the *Archæological Journal*.

† The last recognized as a saint, but not the last formally canonized. This was St. Osmund of Sarum, who died in 1099, and was not

He was Provincial Grand Master of the Templars in England; and armed figures of Templars, treading on dragons, muzzled swine, and various monsters, fill the niches which surround the pedestal of his shrine, still remaining at Hereford. Hereford never possessed more than the bones of her sainted bishop. He died near Orvieto, on his way to Rome, in 1282; and, as was then usual in similar cases, his body was boiled, so as to separate the flesh from the bones. The flesh was interred in a neighbouring church. The bones were brought to Hereford. As they were conveyed into the church, Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, touched the casket which contained them. The bones bled afresh; and Earl Gilbert, struck with compunction, made full restitution to the church of Hereford of certain lands which the bishop had long claimed in vain.\* 'Superstition,' says Fuller, 'is always fondest of the youngest saint . . . and no fewer than four hundred and twenty-five miracles are registered, reported to have been wrought at the tomb' of St. Thomas of Cantilupe. Hereford possessed an older shrine—that of St. Ethelbert, King of East Anglia, who was murdered about the year 792 in a neighbouring palace of the Mercian kings. But the reputation of this shrine was altogether eclipsed by that of the 'youngest saint.'

Returning to Worcester, the pilgrim would find his way to the very heart of England—to Lichfield of the triple spires—the most ancient episcopal see of Mercia. There in the retro-choir, behind the high altar, rose the great shrine of St. Chad—'Ceadda'—bishop of the Mercians between 669 and 672, for which period he ruled 'gloriosissime' the vast diocese, then conterminous with the Mercian kingdom. The story of his death at Lichfield, and of the company of angels who canonized until 1456, although he had always been regarded as a saint in his own diocese.

\* *Life and Deeds of St. Thomas Cantilupe*, Ghent, 1674.



cheered him in his cell with their celestial harmony, is told at length by Bede.\* Cavaliers delighted to tell the later story of the siege,—

‘ . . . When fanatic Brooke  
The fair cathedral spoiled and took ;  
Though, thanks to heaven and good Saint Chad,  
A guerdon meet the spoiler had.’

The siege began on St. Chad’s festival (March 2), and on the second day Lord Brooke was shot dead from the tower of the cathedral.

Through a portion of what is now the ‘black country,’ but was then a fair, green land,

‘With shadowy forests and with champions riched,’

the traveller of the fifteenth century might proceed to Chester, there to kneel before the tomb of St. Werburgh. Werburgh was the daughter of Wulfere, King of Mercia, and, by her mother, was a descendant of Anna, King of the East Anglians, all of whose daughters were sainted. She died in the seventh century ; and in 875, when the Northmen were ravaging Mercia, her relics were brought to Chester, where they remained undisturbed, and where the ealdorman Æthelred and his wife Æthelflæd, the ‘Lady of Mercia,’ afterwards built a church to receive them. Werburgh became the great patroness of the city :—

‘In the Abbay of Chestre she is shryned rychely,  
Pryores and lady of that holy place.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Protectryce of the cytee she is and ever was,  
Called specyall prymate and pryncypall presydent,  
There rulyng under our lorde omnypotent.†

The remarkable well of St. Winifred, some distance west of Chester, attracted numerous pilgrims, and still, in ‘bathing

\* *Hist. Eccles.*, l. iv. c. 3.

† *Holy Life and History of St. Werburgh*, by John Bradshaw, Monk of Chester ; printed by Pynson in 1521, and reprinted by the Chetham Society.

hours,' affords a very curious scene; but there is no shadow of ancient authority for the very existence of the saint, and her whole story seems to have come into existence in the early part of the twelfth century.\*

Turning north from Chester, we enter a wide region, unmarked by the possession of a single shrine of importance; it may almost be said that it contained no place of pilgrimage whatever. Again we must look to the earlier history of the country for an explanation. Much of this north-western land, lying west of the hill-ranges known as the 'backbone of England,' was included within the British kingdoms of Strathclyde and Cumbria long after the regions east and south of it had been thoroughly Anglicized. The British boundaries varied at different times. Cumbria maintained for a considerable period a close connection with Wales; but the whole life of the kingdom was stormy and obscure, and it produced no British clergy of learning or religion such as Wales, during the same period, recognized as saints. The see of Carlisle was not founded until after the Norman Conquest, and the cathedral possessed no shrine. Beyond the Solway there were two great places of pilgrimage within the Strathclyde kingdom—Whithern, the 'Candida Casa' of Bede, where St. Ninian, in the fifth century, had founded, in a position not unlike that of St. David's, close to the rocky coast of Galloway, a church in which his shrine was long revered by the kings of Scotland; and Glasgow, where was the tomb of St. Kentigern, better known as 'St. Mungo,' the founder of the cathedral. Kentigern, who belongs to the sixth century, was made by the genealogists a nephew of King Arthur, like St. David of Wales. He seems to have been an active missionary throughout Strathclyde and Cumbria, and eight churches in Cumberland are named in his honour.

\* See Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, vol. i. p. 161 (note 'a'); and Rees, *Welsh Saints*, p. 297.

These were the only shrines of importance between the Solway and Forth, which 'bridles the wild Highlandman,' and beyond which we meet with numerous saints whose names indicate their Gaelic origin. The tomb of St. Margaret, queen of Malcolm III., at Dunfermline, is the single shrine which connects Scotland with the great company of English saints revered south of the Tweed.

Crossing the country from Carlisle along the line of the Roman wall, the pilgrim might visit Hexham, more from respect for the site where St. Wilfrid had raised his church and St. John of Beverley had long dwelt, than for the sake of any actual relics there ; but would press eagerly onward to the 'holy land of St. Cuthbert,'—

'Where his cathedral huge and vast  
Looks down upon the Wear.'

Here, as he approached the city from the north, and beheld, suddenly outstretched before him, that unrivalled scene—the castle, with the banner of the Prince-bishop floating from its keep, the church and conventual buildings rising sheer from the face of the river-cliff, and towering above masses of greenwood that line the broad winding stream, he would kneel with no ordinary feeling before the cross of 'Montjoie,' as the spot was called from which pilgrims caught the first view of the shrine to which they were bound.\* This was the great shrine of all the north. In the splendour and dignity of the church which protected it, in the richness and singularity of the offerings which hung round it, it was exceeded by no other in the kingdom, with the exception, possibly, of that of St. Thomas at Canterbury. But, in the north, Durham was without a rival. York herself, always jealous of the 'bishopricks,' could set forth in her stately minster no shrine at all comparable in attraction or importance to that of St. Cuthbert.

\* Ducange, s. v.



Scott, indeed, has linked his name with that of a greater saint than Cuthbert:—

‘Come ye from the east, or come ye from the west,  
Or bring relics from over the sea;  
Or come ye from the shrine of Saint James the Divine  
Or Saint John of Beverley!’\*

The victory of Agincourt (October 25, 1415) was gained on the day of his translation, and Henry V., with his queen, afterwards made a pilgrimage to the shrine.†

The great Cistercian churches of Yorkshire possessed no shrine—unless we must except the tomb of St. Ailred at Rievaulx. The monks of Fountains tried hard to obtain the body of St. Robert, a hermit, who died about 1218, in a cell which he had constructed on the Nid, near Knaresborough.‡ But St. Robert was buried in the chapel attached to his cell, which, since the middle of the last century, has received numerous pilgrims of a very different description from those who anciently frequented it. St. Robert’s cell is the cave in which Eugene Aram hid the body of Clark; and had he known of the existence of the saint’s coffin, hewn in the rock—which has been discovered of late years—he might have used it for the effectual concealment of his guilt. This was probably a very local place of pilgrimage, and there was no great shrine to delay the traveller until he reached Lincoln.

\* Sir Walter Scott, *The Grey Brother*.

† The day (Oct. 25) was also the festival of SS. Crispin and Crispinian:—

‘This story shall the good man teach his son;  
And Crispin Crispian shall ne’er go by,  
From this day to the ending of the world,  
But we in it shall be remembered.’

*K. Hen. V.*, act iv. sc. 3.

On the day of the battle a holy oil flowed like ‘drops of sweat’ from the shrine at Beverley.

‡ St. Robert was the son of a certain Tok Fluore, who had been twice mayor of York, in the latter part of the twelfth century. He has had three biographers. For all that is known of him see Walbran’s *Memorials of Fountains*, i. 166 (Surtees Society).

Here he would kneel before the shrine of St. Hugh, in that most graceful and beautiful church which the saint had helped to construct with his own hands. Hugh of Burgundy, Bishop of Lincoln from 1186 to 1200, was canonized by Honorius III. twenty years after his death. No saint in the English calendar received more earnest reverence, and none more entirely deserved it. St. Hugh was one of the noblest bishops of his century. Simple, fearless, indefatigable in his vast diocese, he, although a foreigner, by the sheer excellence of his life, and his zeal for all men's rights, was one of those who assisted in welding into one nation the conquerors and the conquered of England. A crowd of archbishops and bishops—'populus abbatum, turba priorum'—assembled at his burial, and the kings of England and of Scotland, who had met by appointment at Lincoln, assisted in carrying his bier into the cathedral.\*

The Benedictine monasteries of the Fens, of far more ancient foundation than the Cistercian houses, possessed numerous relics, and were all frequented by pilgrims. The pride of Crowland was the tomb of Waltheof, beheaded for his share in the 'brideale' of Norwich. Thorney possessed the shrines of St. Benedict Biscop and St. Botolph. At Ramsey was that of St. Felix, the first bishop and the true 'apostle' of East Anglia. There, too was the shrine of the fabulous St. Ivo.† Before the great gateway of 'Peterborough the Proud,' pilgrims of whatever rank put off their shoes, and then passing through the court and into the church they knelt at the altar of St. Peter, and in certain cases received the same full absolution they would have merited by a journey to Rome. But the queen of all this group of ancient

\* The *Magna Vita* of St. Hugh (Master of the Rolls' series) and a very interesting *Metrical Life* have been published, with admirable introductions by Mr. Dimock.

† The story of his 'invention' is told *infra*.

monasteries was Ely. The shrine of St. Etheldreda, supported by those of her sister abbesses Sexburga and Ermenilda, was one of the most important and frequented in England. The isle had been hallowed since the latter part of the seventh century, when Etheldreda settled there; and the cathedral, completed by Alan of Walsingham's matchless octagon, indicates, by its magnificence and its varied architecture, the flow of wealth which century after century set steadily towards Ely. This part of England was, indeed, under especial saintly patronage. The halidom of St. Etheldreda marched for some distance with that of St. Edmund, whose shrine at Bury was famous as the greatest resort of pilgrims in East Anglia. 'The sun hath not shone,' writes Leland, 'on a pleasanter position;' nor, it may be added, on a vaster and more stately monastery. The great church, which in size perhaps equalled Ely, has disappeared almost entirely; but it is still possible to mark the site of the high altar, before which, and in the presence of the shrine, Archbishop Langton received (Nov. 20th, 1215) the pledges of the barons in arms for the demand of the Great Charter. St. Edmund, King of East Anglia, was defeated and killed by the Northmen in 870, in the course of that terrible irruption, during which they plundered all the chief monasteries of Northern and Eastern England, and murdered their inmates. Little is known of him that can be regarded as at all authentic. His legend asserts that he was taken by the heathen invaders near Hoxne, on the Waveney. They bound him to a tree, and made him a mark for their arrows till his body resembled a hedgehog—'velut asper hericius, aut spinis hirtus carduus.'\* His head was then stricken off and flung into a wood, where it could not be found until his followers, searching for it, and led by a cry of 'Here! here! here!' came on it at length, carefully guarded between the paws of a wolf, who gave up his

\* Abbo, Abbot of Fleury, *Vita S. Edmundi*, printed in Surius.



treasure, and then retreated 'with doleful mourning.' Head and body were afterwards brought to Bury. A huge and very ancient oak-tree in Oakley Park, in the parish of Hoxne, was long pointed out by tradition as that to which St. Edmund was bound. It fell in 1849; and it is somewhat remarkable that, when the tree was broken up, an arrow-head was found in the heart of it. The severed head of the King, the head guarded by a wolf, and the crown with two arrows in saltire—emblems of the martyrdom of St. Edmund—are constantly found in glass, painting, and sculpture throughout Norfolk and Suffolk.

From the land of St. Edmund the pilgrim might turn northward, first to Norwich, where the cathedral displayed a single shrine of no great importance—that of St. William the Less, a boy who, like the lesser St. Hugh of Lincoln (who should have been mentioned before), was said to have been killed by the Jews; and then to a place of far greater fame—to Walsingham, where was the most renowned image of the Virgin in all England. She is the 'Virgo parathalassia' of Erasmus, who, in his colloquy, 'Peregrinatio Religionis ergo,' has given a curious account of the shrine and of the ignorance of its guardians. The shrine and the Priory of Augustinian Canons at Walsingham dated from the twelfth century. The chapel in which the miraculous image stood was, it is said, 'in all respects like unto the Santa Casa of Nazareth and of Loretto.'\* Roger Ascham, after visiting Cologne in 1550, declared that the Three Kings were not so rich as the Lady of Walsingham before the Dissolution. Remote as the place was, it attracted a vast crowd of pilgrims, who, on their way to or from it, might visit many

\* The supposed resemblance of this chapel to the Santa Casa must have been an after-thought, since the famous house at Loretto was not heard of until 1291, and the Walsingham chapel was in existence long before.

of the lesser shrines and relics in which Norfolk was especially rich: the arm of St. Philip, at Castle Acre; the rood of Bromholm, a relic from the Imperial Chapel at Constantinople, held to contain a portion of the true cross; the head of St. John the Baptist, at Trimmingham; the tomb of St. Walstan, patron of 'all mowers and scythe-followers,' at Bawburgh, near Norwich; or the 'good sword of Winfarthing,' a mysterious relic, possessing many virtues, and consulted, like a modern white witch, 'for the discovery of things that were lost.'\* Many such places of pilgrimage existed in the eastern counties; but no great shrine would attract the traveller until, on his way to London, he beheld the long ridge of St. Alban's Church stretching across the low rising ground above the stream of the Ver. Here was the shrine of the so-called protomartyr of Britain. The great Benedictine abbey, founded by Offa of Mercia in 793, was famous for its wealth, its hospitality, and for its long-continued school of monastic historians. Lying as it did on the main northern highway, it was frequently the resting-place of kings and princes, and many important events have been connected with it. We may still recognize the 'insita species venustatis' which Bede admired on the hill of St. Alban; and, in spite of some uncertainty, we must continue to believe that the saint here revered was an actual personage,† martyred

\* Becon, in his *Reliques of Rome*, asserts that he had 'many times heard when a child,' that the sword had belonged to a thief, who took sanctuary in the churchyard and afterwards escaped, leaving this relic behind him. Can it have been shown as the sword of St. Gestas, the good thief crucified with our Lord? Chapels were occasionally dedicated to him.

† The evidence for the existence and martyrdom of St. Alban has been carefully collected by Messrs. Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, vol. i, p. 5. 'All that seems certain is, that within 125 years after the (Diocletian) persecution a belief existed at Verulamium that a martyr named Albanus lay buried near that town.'—*Ibid.* The authorities followed by Bede are Gildas and certain 'Acta,' otherwise unknown.



during the persecution under Diocletian. The authenticity of the relics displayed here is a different question.

At last the pilgrim reached London. In St. Paul's Cathedral, within the City, he would kneel before the shrine of St. Erkenwald, Bishop of London in the seventh century, whose festival was honoured by the presence of all the clergy of the diocese, wearing their richest copes. But St. Erkenwald could not rival the great shrine of the Confessor at Westminster. The relics of the patron saint of England—the chief patron until, after the Synod of Oxford, in 1220, the martlets of St. Edward gave place to the red cross of

‘St. George the bright, our Lady's Knight’—

reposed beneath the stateliest roof in the kingdom, and were surrounded by the noblest associations. Whatever may have been the failings of the Confessor, the ‘baleless king of blithe mood,’ there can be no doubt that the strongest English feeling dictated his popular canonization before William landed at Hastings, and long before it was formally decreed by Alexander III. in 1161. The church in which he was first buried, and which he had himself built, has passed away; but the glories of the existing church of Westminster are due entirely to the fame of the Confessor, and to the reverence paid to him by the third Henry.

The shrine of St. Frideswide, in her church at Oxford, might be visited from London; and, like the company immortalized by Chaucer, the pilgrim would proceed—it may be from the ‘Tabard,’ in Southwark—over the hills and through the green woods of Kent,

‘The holy blissful martyr for to seek’

in his resting-place behind the high altar of Canterbury. Of all English shrines this was the best known on the Continent. ‘Cantorbière, la cité vaillante,’ took her place with Compostella and Cologne. No stranger, of whatever rank, who

landed at Dover, neglected to kneel before the body of St. Thomas. The jewels which hung round it were the offerings of kings and princes, and were some of them, singly, rich enough

‘To ransom great kings from captivity.’

And besides the great shrine, pilgrims who visited Canterbury paid their devotions before the tomb of St. Anselm, and before the supposed relics of St. Alfege—the archbishop murdered by the Danes—and of St. Dunstan. St. Augustine’s also, the church and monastery without the gate, would be visited ; and on their way to Canterbury they might reverence, at Charing, the block on which the Baptist was beheaded, said to have been brought to England by Richard the Lion-heart. Rochester was a more important resting-place. The cathedral of Western Kent contained the shrines of its primitive bishops, St. Paulinus and St. Ithamar—the latter the first native bishop of the English Church ; besides a tomb more eagerly sought by Canterbury pilgrims, that of St. William of Rochester. He is said to have been a Scottish baker of Perth, who was in the habit of giving every tenth loaf to the poor, and who undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, intending to visit the Canterbury shrine on his way. But on Watling Street, near Chatham, he fell in with thieves, always on the watch for wealthy pilgrims, and his murdered body was brought to Rochester, where it was solemnly interred. St. William was duly canonized in 1256.

There was a certain connection between the great saint of Canterbury and St. Richard of Chichester, bishop of that see in the middle of the thirteenth century. St. Richard was a Dominican, and was the only saint of that order in England ; but he was also, in Fuller’s words, ‘a stout Becketist,’ and the two saints are sometimes represented together.\*

\* They are thus represented in the curious paintings (of Perpen-



Beyond Chichester, the next 'station' of the pilgrim would be Winchester, a 'locus venerabilis,' if there was one in England, yet not marked by any greatly frequented or very important shrine. On a raised platform behind the high altar stood forth the shrines of St. Birinus, converter of Cynegils, the first Christian king of Wessex; of St. Swithun, the bishop, buried at first, by his own desire, outside the church, 'where passers-by might tread on his grave, and where rain from the eaves might fall on it,'\* but afterwards translated; and of St. Athelwold, builder of the cathedral which was replaced by the Norman structure of Bishop Walkelin. But to the shrines of these sainted bishops was due but a small portion of the glory which rested on Winchester. Old English memories were crowded round her. The remains of many kings lay in the cathedral, including those of Cnut, whose golden crown rested on the head of the great image of the Saviour in front of the altar. In the 'new minster' was interred the best and most perfect of all English rulers—Alfred the Great; and the long succession of princely prelates who in later ages filled the see, and have left enduring memorials of their splendour and magnificence, maintained and increased the renown of the ancient capital. Salisbury, a cathedral of much more recent foundation, possessed no canonized saint until so late as the year 1456, when St. Osmund was so honoured by Pope Calixtus III., the first of the Borgias. But Osmund had long been revered as a saint in his own church. He was the first Norman bishop of

dicular date) on the tomb of John Wootton, in Maidstone Church Kent. At West Tarring, in Sussex, where was an ancient palace of the bishops of Chichester, are the remains of a fig orchard, said to have been planted partly by St. Richard, partly by Becket.

\* W. Malmes, *De Gestis Pontificum*, p. 242. It may have been this direction that gave St. Swithun his reputation as a weather saint. Tradition asserts, however, that the removal of his relics from his grave to the golden shrine prepared for them was prevented by forty days of continued rain.

the see, and the compiler of the famous Ordinal 'for the use of Sarum.' He died in 1099, and was buried in the old cathedral; but on the removal from Old Sarum to Salisbury his remains were conveyed to the new site.

The great minsters which lie west and south of Salisbury seem each to have possessed its saint. In Wimborne was the tomb of Ethelred, elder brother of King Alfred, who, chiefly from his brave struggles with the heathen Danes, was looked upon as a saint and martyr. At Shaftesbury lay Edward the 'martyr,' killed at Corfe 'by order,' as it is asserted, of his stepmother, Elfrida, and distinctly recognized as a saint; and at Sherborne were buried some of the earlier kings of Wessex. But the saint who should have been the glory of Sherborne, Aldhelm, the first and greatest bishop of the see, was interred in the Abbey Church of Malmesbury; which also boasted of, and still shows, the tomb of the 'gloriosus rex' Athelstan.

The circuit of the chief shrines is thus completed. Their strong national character is sufficiently evident. By far the greater number of English saints belong to the period before the Norman Conquest, and for the most part to those early days when Christianity was in active combat with heathenism. The first Christian teachers in each English kingdom, including St. Augustine and his followers, are in almost all cases recognized as saints; but theirs were not always the shrines which afterwards became the most important. The first Christian teachers, Augustine, Birinus, Felix, were strangers; so, though in a somewhat less degree, were Aidan and the first Northumbrian bishops. English reverence and religious feeling were not so greatly moved by them as by the primitive saints of home birth, St. Cuthbert, St. Edmund, St. Etheldreda, or St. Chad. Such shrines as these formed sacred centres in each ancient kingdom: St. Cuthbert for Northumbria, St. Edmund for East Anglia, St. Etheldreda



and St. Frideswide for South-eastern Mercia, and St. Chad for the north of that kingdom. Kent, besides St. Augustine and St. Paulinus, possessed the relics of many sainted bishops; but her lesser shrines were entirely eclipsed by the glory which in later days gathered round that of St. Thomas. It is somewhat remarkable that Wessex possessed no great shrine, for we can hardly place that of St. Swithun at Winchester in the foremost rank. But in this kingdom, and especially after it became dominant, there was a marked tendency to confer saintly honours on its royal race. Edgar the 'peaceful,' Edward the 'martyr,' (at Shaftesbury,) and Ethelred, elder brother of Alfred, (at Wimborne,) were all so recognized. Athelstan was not so honoured; and we can only wonder, without being able to explain how it came to pass, that the king whose character, as has been truly said, is the most perfect in history—the great Alfred—a better king and a nobler man than the sainted Lewis of France,\* was never proclaimed a saint by popular acclamation. His should have been the great shrine of Wessex, a shrine before which all Englishmen might have knelt with far deeper feeling than could ever have been inspired by that of the Confessor at Westminster. That royal saint, indeed, belongs to a period when the old divisions of England had altogether changed character, and were gradually disappearing; a change which brought about a more widespread reputation for the principal shrines. They became centres of national life rather than of that provincial life to which they first belonged; and although each district was always proudest of its own saint, it was the splendour of the entire constellation that gave to this country her ancient reputation as a land of saints—'insula sanctorum.'

The early date of the principal English saints is marked by the fact that, although great Benedictine abbeys were in

\* See Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, i. pp. 50—55.

many instances the guardians of their shrines, St. Wulfstan at Worcester, St. Swithun at Winchester, and St. Dunstan, alone belong to that order ; so that of the fifty thousand saints claimed by the Benedictines, England contributes but three of the greater rank. The Benedictine abbeys at Ely and at Durham grew up round the tombs of the earlier saints. Many of the greater churches, distinguished by saintly shrines, became in fact the property of the Benedictines during the struggle between regulars and seculars, when the former frequently took the place of the latter. The Cistercians, whose reform dates from the end of the eleventh century, could boast of no great shrine.

And now, what is a shrine ? The question is not an idle one, since but scanty portions remain of any English shrine, and of nearly all those on the Continent the position and accessories have been much changed since the period of their greatest splendour. From a comparison of the greater foreign shrines, however, with the relics of our own, we are enabled to picture to ourselves with tolerable clearness the ancient appearance of such important shrines as those of the Confessor, of St. Cuthbert, or of St. Thomas.

The passion for the possession of relics, and in especial for that of the bodies, of saints, had been fully developed long before the arrival of St. Augustine in this country. But all the earlier English saints, however they may have been revered during their lifetime, were buried 'in peace,' in accordance with the primitive custom of the Church, which erected her 'martyria' above the graves of those who had suffered for the faith. As the reputation of each saint increased, it became the custom to raise the body from the grave in which it had been first laid, and (if it had not already been buried within the walls) to bring it into the church, where it was placed in a tomb prepared for it above ground, generally near the altar. We have distinct evidence

that this was done in the cases of St. Etheldreda and St. Cuthbert. Sixteen years after the death of Etheldreda, her sister, Sexburga, raised her body—which, like that of so many other saints, is said to have been found incorrupt—and placed it in a Roman sarcophagus of white marble, found among the ruins of ancient Granchester, near Cambridge. The sarcophagus, which Bede tells us fitted the body of the virgin as though it had been made for it, was then conveyed into the church, open to the sight and to the reverence of all.\* St. Cuthbert, after his death in his solitary island, was brought to Lindisfarne, and buried in a stone coffin within the church. Eleven years later the monks raised him, and placed his body ‘dignæ venerationis gratiâ’ in a coffin above the pavement.† From these actual tombs the remains were in most cases again translated into costly shrines (‘scrinia’) or repositories, plated with gold and silver, and for the most part moveable, so that they could be carried in procession. The use of such shrines was common before the eleventh century, though rather perhaps for the preservation of such relics as were of lesser size. The greatest zeal for their fabrication, and for the translation of the remains of saints to the place of greatest honour in their churches, was displayed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and it was then that the shrine assumed its most imposing form and proportion. An English shrine of the first class—and those on the Continent differed but little—consisted of at least four distinct parts: ‡ (1) the stone basement; (2) the altar at the west end of it, dedicated to the saint; (3) the actual shrine or case containing

\* Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, l. iv. c. 19.

† ‘Et involutum novo amictu corpus, levique in theca reconditum, super pavimentum sanctuarii composuerunt.’—Beda, *Vita S. Cudberti*, cap. xlii.

‡ These divisions have been pointed out by Mr. Burges, in his paper on the Shrine of the Confessor, *Gleanings from Westminster Abbey*, p. 127.

the body, properly called, where it was moveable, the 'feretrum' \* (on this the greatest cost and treasure were expended, and to it were attached the jewels and most precious offerings made to the saint); (4) the cooperculum,† or wooden covering, often painted and much enriched, with which the 'feretrum' was protected on ordinary occasions, and which was suspended from the vaulted roof by ropes. The whole structure, often raised, as at Durham, on a wide platform, was thus of considerable size and height; and, placed as it usually was at the back of the high altar, it towered above the reredos dividing the presbytery from the retro-choir, and was by far the most conspicuous object in the church.

The basement on which the 'feretrum' rested may be said to represent in some sort the tomb from which the relics of the saint were removed to be enshrined. In some cases the tomb itself may have been used as a basement. The basement of the Confessor's shrine at Westminster remains almost perfect; that of St. Thomas of Cantilupe, at Hereford, is still uninjured; and the singular base of St. David's shrine retains its ancient position in his remote cathedral. With the exception of some fragments of St. Werburga's shrine at Chester, these were the only portions of any English shrine known to exist until the beginning of the year 1872, when, during the restoration of the great Abbey church, portions of the base of the shrine of St. Alban were discovered, built up in walls

\* The word 'feretrum' is used for a carriage or conveyance of any sort. Bede (*H. E.*, l. iv. c. 6) mentions the 'feretrum caballarum,' the horse car or litter, in which Earconwald, Bishop of London, used to travel—'quo infirmus vehi solebat.' It gradually came to be used almost exclusively for the moveable shrine of a saint. The word is constantly confounded with 'feretory,' which means the place where the 'feretrum' was deposited.

† Mr. Burges uses the word 'cooperculum' to distinguish the covering of the shrine from a 'coopertorium,' or flat wooden canopy, such as appears above the tomb of Richard II. at Westminster. 'Coopertura' sometimes signifies the plating ('lamina') of the shrine.—*Matt. Paris, Vita S. Albani Abbatis*, p. 1010 (ed. Wats.).



which, since the reign of Edward VI., had divided the Lady Chapel from the retro-choir. The actual 'feretra,' with their gold and jewels, disappeared, of course, in the sixteenth century; and during the changes which then occurred the ornamental stonework was almost universally destroyed. There is no trace of the basement of St. Thomas's shrine at Canterbury, nor of that of St. Cuthbert at Durham. But they greatly resembled the existing base at Westminster. This dates from the reign of Henry III., and supported the shrine made for the Confessor's relics on their translation in 1269. It is of Purbeck marble, enriched with glass mosaic, the work, as an inscription records, of a certain Peter, 'civis Romanus.' On the north and south sides are three trefoil-headed niches, the backs of which were filled in with mosaic, so as to resemble windows of stained glass. They are of some height and depth, and sick persons were sometimes allowed to remain in them all night, in hope of obtaining a miraculous cure, especially of the 'king's evil.\*' The recovered base of St. Alban's shrine is of somewhat similar character. It is of Purbeck marble, about 9 feet long by 4 broad, and rising, in two stories, to a height of about 8 feet. The longer sides, below, were pierced with four niches, the shorter with two. The upper story was formed by rich canopied niches. Marble steps, on which the shrine was elevated, have also been found, and are much worn by the knees of pilgrims. There were open arches in the base of the Canterbury shrine; and at Durham the base, given by the Lord Neville about 1380, was 'of fine and costly green marble, all lined and gilt with gold,

\* If the illuminations in the *Life of St. Edward*, in the Cambridge University Library, represent (as is most probable) the shrine as it appeared after the translation in 1269, it would seem that the base was at first (though it can only have been for a very short time) different from that which now exists. In one of these drawings, engraved for Mr. Burges's paper, there is a circular hole in the base of the shrine, through which a sick person is creeping.



having four seats or places convenient underneath the shrine, for the pilgrims or lame men sitting on their knees to lean or rest on in the time of their devout offering.\* At St. David's, in front and at the back of the basement (which resembles a stone altar tomb, filling the space between two piers of the presbytery) are small foiled openings with a hollow at the back, in which offerings might be placed by the pilgrims. In all cases a close contact with the shrine—the resting of the body in one of the lower niches, or at least the placing within it of some diseased limb—was regarded as a high privilege, and, as was then believed, was frequently attended by some special favour from the saint. On the Continent, and it would seem at some places in England, a superstition far more ancient than Christianity was connected with these openings and recesses in the saint's tomb. The tomb or shrine of St. Dizier in Alsace is a hollowed monolith of the twelfth century, in form of a small cell, with a ridged roof. On either side is an arched opening, through which insane persons were made to creep, in hope of effecting a cure. A similar ceremony at the tomb of St. Menoux in Auvergne cured the headache.† The tomb of St. Arnould, near Beauvais, has circular holes in the sides, used by sick persons with the same object.‡ We may fairly regard as belonging to this species of 'folk-lore' the passage of 'St. Wilfrid's needle' in the crypt at Ripon, which was held to be a test of continence;

\* *Description or briefe Declaration of all y<sup>e</sup> auncient Monuments Rites and Customs belonging to the Monasticall Church of Durham before y<sup>e</sup> Suppression, writtten in 1593; first published in 1672.*

† Didron, *Annales Archéologiques*, xviii. 15.—At St. Dizier, after creeping through the openings, the patients were plunged into a stream of water running through the village. In some cases, according to M. Viollet-le-Duc (*Dict. de l'Archit. Française*, viii. p. 36), a reliquary was fixed between the 'rétable' of the altar and the chancel wall, and the sick person was made to pass beneath it.

‡ A notice of this tomb, as illustrating the Confessor's Shrine, is given in *Gleanings from Westminster Abbey*, p. 137.

and the Cornish 'holed stones,' through which the sick are still made to creep, carry us back no doubt to the heathen period, though we need not insist, with Borlase, on pressing the Druids into the service.

The 'feretrum' or shrine containing the relics, which stood on this stone basement, was generally, when of great size, of wood covered with a plating of precious metal; but was sometimes entirely of gold or silver. It has been already said that the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are the periods in which these shrines attained their greatest magnificence; but they had long before called forth the choicest art of the goldsmith and enameller. The earliest are no doubt Byzantine, and are rather reliquaries than shrines. Such reliquaries were sometimes made in the form of the portion of the body they contained—a head, an arm, or a foot; but they more generally resembled some part of a church—as a *flèche*, a *tourelle*, a portal, or a dome. In the latter form are twelve little reliquaries in the Convent of St. Paul on Mount Athos, made, it is asserted, from the gold offered to our Lord by the wise men, and containing mingled grains of frankincense and myrrh—also part of their offerings. These are said to have been the gift of Constantine the Great.\* Reliquaries like these are to the greater shrines much what a chapel or chantry is to a church. Many of the most ancient shrines on the Continent were destroyed in the revolutionary fury of the last century; but some of considerable antiquity still exist, and show clearly what was the primitive type. They are almost always in the form of a church—varying in character,

\* Didron, *Bronzes et Orfèvrerie du Moyen Age*, *Ann. Archéol.* xix. Mr. Tozer (*Highlands of Turkey*) describes a shrine of much later date in the monastery of St. Dionysius on Mount Athos, shaped like a Byzantine church, silver-gilt, with five domes of gold. The windows are enriched with a singular open-work tracery, and at the sides and ends are recesses, with portraits of saints in niello. It contains the arm of St. Niphon.

of course, with their date. Under arcades lining the sides are figures of the Apostles ; at the eastern end is the Saviour ; and at the west, where was the opening by which the relics were introduced, was either St. Peter with his keys, or the saint of the shrine himself. Thus the shrine, like the church in which it stood, represented the heavenly city,—St. Peter or the local saint acting as ‘janitor coeli.’ Many such shrines still exist in the Limousin, and have been described by M. Didron.\* The metal shrine of St. Gertrude at Nivelles, dating from the end of the thirteenth century, is a precise fac simile of a church of that time, with a triple western portal, windows, and a three-aisled nave. The shrine which contained the famous relics of the Sainte-Chapelle is a miniature of the chapel itself. An ivory shrine in the Musée d’Antiquités at Brussels, of the twelfth century, curiously reproduces the Romanesque Rhine church of that date, with its two small eastern and two western towers. The shrine of St. Eleutherius in the Cathedral at Tournay was constructed about 1247, at which time the saint was translated into the newly built choir, where the shrine now stands. This is one of the finest of the earlier shrines existing ; and its preservation through the troubles of 1566 and 1793 is little short of a miracle. It is of gold filigraïn, encrusted with precious stones and enamels. In the arcade around it are figures of saints and Apostles, and at the ends those of the Saviour and St. Eleutherius.† This great shrine is in the shape of a small church, but without tower or flèche ; and this was the form

\* *Annales Archéologiques*, t. xix.

† *Ann. Archéol.* t. xiii. The character of the figures, says M. Didron, is rather Roman of the Lower Empire than Gothic. The shrine itself is distinctly Gothic (ogivale). Tournay was in the Archdiocese of Rheims, and the figures on the western portal of the Cathedral at Rheims strongly resemble those of the shrine. ‘Il y a là, comme à Tournai, une réminiscence, une imitation flagrante, de la sculpture romaine du bas Empire.’ The figures on shrines constantly resemble, in every detail, the sculptures in contemporary churches.

which the largest and most important shrines finally took, and which was, as we know from descriptions, that of the great shrines at Canterbury, at Durham, and at St. Alban's—the last of which, however, rose at the angles into turrets of open work.\* These shrines exceeded the earlier in richness, though hardly in artistic beauty and skill.† We cannot estimate the value of the jewels cramped and fastened to the sides of Becket's shrine, or to that of St. Cuthbert. The treasures of the

\* The St. Alban's shrine was in some respects very remarkable. There were, in fact, two shrines—an outer and inner—besides the 'cooperculum,' both of which were highly enriched. The two shrines stood on the base just discovered. The first, or inner shrine, was made at the time of Abbot Geoffry (1119—1146), by a monk called Anketil. It was of gold, set with gems and enamel. 'Fecit autem illud opere ductili, et elevato, et educto, imagines impulit elevari, et concavas cæmento solidavit, et elegantiam totius corporis feretralis in brevius culmen ascendendo coartavit' (Matt. Paris, *Vit. Abbat*, p. 1010). One of the stones brought from the treasury of the convent to be used was an ancient onyx ('sardius onicleus'); but as this stone was of great service to women in childbed, it was not inserted in the shrine, lest any of its virtue should thereby be lost. Abbot Simon (1166—1188) caused the outer shrine to be constructed, 'per manum præcellentissimi artificis Magistri Johannis aurifabri.' At the west end (which fronted the high altar) was represented the martyrdom of St. Alban and (apparently above it) the Virgin and Child. At the east was the crucified Saviour between St. Mary and St. John. Round the shrine were subjects from the legendary life of St. Alban,—'eminentibus imaginibus de argento et auro, opere propulsato (quod vulgariter levatura dicitur).' The shrine rose to a crest—'in crispam et artificiosam cristam consurgit.' 'In quatuor angulis turribus fenestratis, tholis crystallinis cum suis mirabilibus, quadratur venusta.' In this shrine, which was of great size, Abbot Geoffry's 'theca'—'ipsius martyris theca, quæ quasi ejus conclave est, et in qua ipsius secreta ossa recondi dignoscuntur'—was enclosed (M. Paris, p. 1037, ed. Wats). The inner shrine, therefore, represented at St. Alban's the ancient coffins of wood, in which St. Edmund and St. Cuthbert reposed in their respective shrines. Probably the fact that the bodies of the latter saints were held to be incorrupt, while only the bones of St. Alban were preserved, accounts for the different treatment.

† To this later time belong the shrines of St. Remigius at Rheims, and of St. Ferdinand at Seville; which, as Dean Stanley has pointed out, of all which now exist, are perhaps those which most nearly resemble the final appearance of the great English shrines.

Three Kings of Cologne are said (allowance must doubtless be made for much exaggeration) to be worth six millions of francs—£240,000. They can have been little added to since the sixteenth century; and if Ascham was right in asserting that 'Our Lady of Walsingham' was richer, we may form some faint idea of the enormous wealth anciently displayed round the great shrines of England.

The cooperulum or covering of the shrine became necessary, not only for the protection of the precious work and jewels from occasional injury, but also as a defence against thieves; for the Northmen of the tenth century were by no means the only persons who looked with longing eyes toward the treasures of great churches and their shrines. In the year 1086, the shrine of St. David was stolen from the church, carried out of the 'dinas' or city, and there spoiled of all its gold and silver.\* At a later period the head of St. Hugh of Lincoln, which was kept in a reliquary apart from the body, was stolen. The gold and jewels were stripped from the case, and the head was flung into a field, where it was watched by a faithful crow until discovered by its proper guardians.† This occurred in 1364, when, according to Knighton, there were many similar robberies of shrines and relics, and many of the thieves were taken and hanged. These were thefts on a large scale: but smaller losses were not infrequent; and one case is recorded of an apparent worshipper who, seeming to kiss the jewels on a certain shrine, managed to detach them and carry them off in her mouth. Much care, in fact, was necessary for the protection of the shrine and its treasures. One of the monks or canons of the church was always shrine-keeper, with others under him, whose duty it was to watch night and day, for

\* Freeman and Jones's *St. David's*, p. 104. The relics were either not stolen, or were recovered.

† Knighton, ap. Twysden, x. Script. 2628.



which purpose a 'watching-chamber' was constructed near the shrine, either forming a portion of the church itself, or a wooden enclosure, sometimes much enriched. The Canterbury shrine, on extraordinary occasions, was guarded by a troop of fierce dogs;\* and it is possible that the service of such protectors was in general use. They still (or, at least, such was very recently the case) are the chief shrine-keepers in the Church of St. Anthony at Padua, exceedingly rich in works of art, though the Dalmatian dogs who protect it could not prevent the spoliation of the gold and gems of the shrine in 1797. Two of these dogs keep constant watch; and Valery tells the story of a servant of the Sografi, who, absorbed in prayer before the shrine, did not observe the closing of the church doors. The dogs placed themselves one on either side of him, and would not allow him to stir until the morning.†

In England, and very generally on the Continent, the usual position of a great shrine was at the back of the high altar, between that and the eastern end of the church.‡ It is probable, as has been suggested, that this part of the church was chosen as being the most sacred, and the most remote from the nave open to all worshippers.§ It is always the position of the Lady Chapel in churches which possessed no

\* Ellis, *Orig. Letters*, Ser. iii. vol. iii. p. 164.

† *Voyage en Italie*, i. 412.

‡ The great shrine of St. Alban was at first placed above the high altar. 'Et loco suo eminentiori, scilicet supra Majus Altare, contra frontem celebrantis, collocavit; ut in facie et in corde habeat quilibet celebrans missam supra idem Altare Martyris memoriam.' (M. Paris, p. 1037.) The west end of the shrine, with the martyrdom sculptured on it, was in front of the celebrant. This is the position (in a sort of niche above the high altar) still occupied by the shrine of St. Rumold at Mechlin, and by some other continental shrines. The shrine of St. Edmund at Bury seems at first to have been thus placed. But both that and St. Alban's shrine were afterwards removed, and stood alone (so that it was possible to pass quite round them) in the retro-choir.

§ Stanley, *Hist. Mem.* p. 188. The Crusades had probably much to do with the increasing reverence for the east.

great saint ; and the fact that an eastern Lady Chapel existed at Chichester and at Hereford, before the canonization of St. Richard and St. Thomas of Cantilupe, accounts for the position of their shrines—the former in the south, the latter in the north transept of their cathedrals. On the other hand, the existence of an important shrine sometimes rendered necessary an unusual position for the Lady Chapel. At Ely, the place of greatest honour had been assigned to St. Etheldreda and her sisters ; and Alan of Walsingham was compelled to project his beautiful chapel from the north transept. At Durham, the Galilee at the extreme west end of the church served as the Lady Chapel, a previous attempt to construct it at the east end having failed—‘a manifest sign,’ says the chronicler, ‘that the work was not acceptable to God, or to His servant St. Cuthbert.’\* St. Cuthbert, it need hardly be said, sternly forbade the presence of women at his shrine, or within his church beyond a certain mark ; and the western Galilee was far enough removed to allow of their entering it. The ground around every shrine was in an especial manner hallowed. At first no burial, even of the greatest personages, was permitted near it. At Durham, indeed, for some centuries, no interment was allowed within the walls of the church. Bishop William of St. Carileph, founder of the great Norman Cathedral, would not give leave for his own burial in the midst of the work which he had so nobly begun, saying that it was unmeet for any ordinary corpse to be brought into the presence of the incorrupt St. Cuthbert. It was not until the beginning of the fourteenth century that the ancient rule was broken ; when the first to be buried in the cathedral, and at no great distance from the shrine, was the great prelate Anthony Bek—‘the proudest lord in Chrestientie’—Prince Bishop of Durham, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and King of the Isle of Man. Even

\* Gaufridus de Coldingham, cap. 7.—*Ang. Sac.* i. p. 722.



the body of this 'mighty clerk' was not brought through the church, but was conveyed to its resting-place through a door on the north side of the 'nine altars,' where it lies. One other bishop, the learned Richard of Bury, was buried there; but no stately monument marked the grave either of him or of Anthony Bek. It was not apparently thought fit that any ordinary sepulchral magnificence should be displayed so near the shrine. At Canterbury the Black Prince was the first personage deemed worthy to rest near the shrine of St. Thomas.

In almost every case the translation of the saint to the shrine in which he finally rested was preceded by the rebuilding of the eastern portion of his church. This was frequently rendered possible by the offerings made at the saint's tomb before his translation. The translation itself was, in the more important cases, a ceremony of the utmost grandeur and solemnity. None can have surpassed that of St. Remigius in 1049, when his shrine was conveyed into the new church prepared for it in the presence of the Pope, Leo IX., who himself for a time supported it, and in that of the bishops and abbots assembled at the Council of Rheims; but it is probable that few more striking displays of magnificence have ever been witnessed in England than those which attended the translation of Becket at Canterbury in 1220, or of the Confessor in 1269. At Canterbury, King Henry 'the young child' was present; and the primates of England and of France, with sundry great lords, assisted in bearing the chest with the precious relics to the shrine prepared for it. All comers were entertained by the convent. The streets ran with wine; and all the surrounding villages were filled—

'Of bishops and abbots, parsons and priors,  
Of earls and barons, and of many knights thereto;  
Of sergeants and of squires, and of husbandmen enow,  
And of simple men eke of the land,—so thick thither drew.'

The same King Henry—but then within three years of his death—assisted at the translation of the Confessor's relics to their shrine in the unrivalled church which he had prepared for them. The cost of such great festivals was enormous; and we are told that the expenses of Becket's translation were hardly paid off by the fourth successor of Archbishop Stephen Langton. Yet in two remarkable instances the whole cost of a great translation was defrayed by a single prelate. In 1280, Thomas Bek, consecrated on the same day to the bishopric of St. David's, took on himself the entire charge of the translation of St. Hugh of Lincoln to his shrine in the new 'Angel Choir,' in the presence of Edward I. and his queen, besides a host of princes, bishops, and knights. His brother, the famous Antony, three years later, on the day of his own consecration in York Minster to the see of Durham, translated the relics of St. William of York, also in the presence of Edward I. and Queen Eleanor, to a magnificent shrine, which, with the whole cost of the festival, was the gift of this most splendid prelate. Advantage was sometimes taken of the translation to examine the saintly relics. Of such examinations we have happily two very interesting and full descriptions, one of the body of St. Edmund at Bury in 1198, the other of that of St. Cuthbert in 1104. From them we gather much collateral information relating to the shrines.

The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond, monk of Bury, from 1173 to 1202, affords without doubt the most curious existing picture of old monastic life, with all its jealousies, its difficulties, and its gossip. Jocelin tells us that in the year 1198 the 'glorious martyr Edmund' thought fit to alarm the convent, and to teach it the more careful keeping of his body. This had been translated by the first Norman abbot in 1095, but the coffin or inner 'theca' was not then opened. In 1198 it occupied probably the position to which it had been removed a century before. Between the shrine and the



high altar was a table on which two large waxen torches were constantly burning. On the vigil of St. Etheldreda, whilst the guardians of the shrine were asleep, a part of one of these torches fell, and set fire to the table. When the monks were at last roused, they found the whole shrine wrapped in flames, which they only extinguished with difficulty. Much of the woodwork of the shrine was burnt, and the silver plates which covered it scarcely hung together. Only the golden Majesty (a figure of our Lord) in front of the shrine, with the jewels set in it, remained unharmed and 'fairer after the fire.' The brethren feared at first that the 'cup of St. Edmund' had been destroyed; but although its oaken case was entirely consumed, the cup itself was found unharmed amid the rubbish.\* Happily, says Jocelin, the great beam behind (ultra) the high altar had been removed to be recarved.† On this beam were placed the rood with Mary and John, a chest containing the shirt ('camisia') of St. Edmund, and many other relics, some of them suspended from the beam in small 'arks.' These of course escaped. Abbot Samson, absent at the time, returned to the monastery in great haste and grief; and told his monks in full chapter that this calamity had happened 'for their sins,' and especially because of their 'murmurings touching meat and drink.' He gave himself fifteen golden rings ('anuli') towards replating the shrine,

\* Water from the cup of St. Edmund was held to be of great service in all diseases of cattle.—Yates, *Hist. of Bury St. Edmunds*.

† 'Contigit etiam, volente Altissimo, tunc temporis magnam trabem quæ solebat esse ultra altare sublatam esse, ut nova sculptura repararetur.'—*J. de Brakelonda*, p. 79. There was a similar beam at St. Alban's: 'Abbas Gulielmus . . . quasdam structuras nobilissimas circa majus altare construxit: cum quadam trabe, Historiam Sancti Albani representante, quæ totam illam artificiosam machinam [apparently the high altar with the shrine is thus indicated] supereminet. Quod quidem opus splendidissimum magister Walterus de Colecestria, non sine magno studio laborioso et labore studioso . . . perfecit.'—*M. Paris, Vit. Abbat.* p. 1055.

and proposed that the convent, for the same end, should resign their 'pittances'—or extra dishes—for one year. The convent agreed; but the sacrist afterwards discovered that 'St. Edmund could well repair his shrine without any such aid,' and the monks were accordingly spared this unusual 'mortification.'

The abbot had before the fire been preparing for the elevation and enrichment of the shrine. Marble shafts for supporting a new base were already polished, and the work was now hastened. In the meantime it was determined to remove the shrine, and to place it temporarily on the high altar. Even such a removal as this called for much solemn preparation. The abbot, on the Sunday after the feast of St. Edmund (Nov. 20), proclaimed a three days' fast; and when the monks assembled in the church that night for lauds, they found a new shrine standing on the altar, covered on the outside with white deer skins, fastened with nails of silver. The saint himself was reposing in his usual place. When lauds had been sung, the monks all received 'discipline.' Then the abbot and his attendants, clad in albs, reverently approached the 'loculus' or chest\* in which the body of St. Edmund was resting, and removed from it the linen and silken wrappers with which it was covered. When the chest appeared, it was seen that an angel of gold, about a foot in length, with a sword in one hand and a banner in the other, was fastened on the outside, above the breast of the body. Over it were the words—

' Martiris ecce zoma servat Michaelis agalma ;'

and below was an opening in the lid of the chest, through which former guardians used to put their hands so that they might touch the holy body. The chest was then raised, borne

\* This 'loculus' was placed within the shrine, like the coffins of St. Cuthbert at Durham. At St. Alban's the loculus was really an inner shrine. (See *ante*.)

to the altar, and enclosed in the shrine. 'I helped to support it,' says Jocelin, 'with my sinful hand, though the abbot had ordered no one to approach unless called for.'

And now came a great disappointment to the monks. They thought that the abbot would have exhibited the chest to the people, and perhaps have opened it in the sight of the convent. The abbot wished, indeed, 'to see his patron,' but he determined that the examination should be private. Accordingly, choosing twelve brethren, while 'the rest of the house were asleep,' he withdrew the chest from the shrine, and opened it. It was found 'filled with the holy body, so that hardly a needle could be introduced between the head or the feet and the wood.' Many wrappings of silk and linen were then removed, the last being of thin silk, 'like the veil of some holy woman;' and the body then appeared, wrapped closely in linen. The eyes and the nose, 'valde grossum et valde eminentem,' were distinctly visible. The abbot did not venture to remove the linen—perhaps, indeed, it was impossible—but taking between his hands the head (which was found, in accordance with the ancient legend of St. Edmund, miraculously reattached to the body), he blessed the hour in which the 'glorious martyr' had been born, and then prayed that he would forgive him who had dared to touch him—'quod te tango, peccator et miser.'\* The body, as was usually expected in such cases, appeared flexible and incorrupt. Besides the abbot and his assistants, these things, says Jocelin, were witnessed by brother John of Diss, who, with some servants of the vestry, had managed to conceal himself in the roof of the church. The chest was finally reclosed, wrapped in linen, and over that in a piece of silken

\* 'Gloriose martir, sancte Ædmonde, benedicta sit illa hora qua natus fuisti. Gloriose martir, ne vertas michi in perditionem audaciam meam, quod te tango peccator et miser: tu scis devocionem meam.'—*J. de Brakelonda*, p. 84.

brocade, which had been offered at the shrine by Archbishop Hubert Walter. It was then replaced in the shrine, of which the panels were closed. After matins the abbot assembled the monks before the high altar, and told them what had been done. 'When we heard it,' says Jocelin, 'we sang with tears' (partly caused, perhaps, by grief at having been excluded from the great sight), "'Te Deum laudamus," and then hastened to ring the bells in the choir.'

Shrine, relics—even the great church of St. Edmund—have all passed away, and no opening or 'coign of vantage' remains, from which, like the adventurous brother John, we might obtain such a glimpse as would bring these things at all nearer to us. It is otherwise at Durham. There we can still see and handle, not only portions of gifts made in most ancient days at the shrine, but even certain relics looked upon and used by St. Cuthbert himself. The great recorded examination of St. Cuthbert's body was made in 1104, when the Norman cathedral, begun by Bishop William of St. Carileph, had been so far completed under his successor, Ralph Flambard, as to permit of the removal of St. Cuthbert's coffin to the shrine prepared for it. When the monks of Lindisfarne first raised his body from the grave, in 698, eleven years after his death, they found it, so Bede asserts, entirely incorrupt.\* It had since undergone much wandering and many changes ; and at the time of the removal in 1104—although the fame of no incorrupt saintly body, the 'caro carie carens,' as the chroniclers described it, had been more widely spread—there was some doubt of its continued preservation, or indeed whether any relic of the saint still remained in his coffin. A great company of

\* 'Invenerunt corpus totum, quasi adhuc viveret, integrum, et flexibilibus artuum compagibus multo dormienti, quam mortuo, similis.—Beda, *Vita S. Cudberti*, cap. xlii.



Benedictine abbots had assembled at Durham to assist in the translation ; but the day before that took place certain of the monks, with Turgot, the prior, at their head, were allowed to examine the coffin and to set all doubts at rest.\* They found, we are told, 'the venerable body of the blessed father' lying on its side in a perfect state, with a great number of relics in the same coffin. These, no doubt, were the head of St. Oswald and the relics of St. Aidan and other early bishops of the Northumbrians, which it is distinctly stated were placed in St. Cuthbert's coffin when that was removed from Lindisfarne. The robes in which the body was wrapped are duly described. The Abbot of Séez was then permitted to touch the body and to show it to those great personages who were waiting its translation. It was then carried in solemn procession round the new church, in the midst of a vast kneeling crowd, and at last reached its resting-place in the choir. There was some change when the 'nine altars' was built ; but the shrine thenceforward occupied the same place until the dissolution in 1542, when there is an express record that the body of St. Cuthbert was buried under the platform on which the shrine had stood.† In spite of this record, however, and in the face of many difficulties, there was, it has long been asserted, a tradition to the effect that the 'treasure beyond gold or topaz,' the incorrupt body of the saint, had been secretly removed by certain of the monks, and concealed, until better times should allow of its reappearance, in some unknown part of the church :—

\* Of the details of this translation and examination there are two narratives,—one anonymous, printed in the *Acta Sanctorum*, and evidently written by a contemporary ; the other by Reginald of Durham, in his *Libellus de S. Cuthberto*. Both are given at length in Raine's *St. Cuthbert* (Durham, 1828). Reginald's book has been printed for the Surtees Society.

† The statement is made by various persons, many of whom were Romanists.—Raine's *St. Cuthbert*, pp. 174—180.



‘ There, deep in Durham’s Gothic shade,  
His relics were in secret laid ;  
But none may know the place—  
Save of his chosen servants three,  
Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,  
Who share that wondrous grace.’\*

The tradition was preserved among the English Benedictines ; but whatever amount of belief it had obtained ought to have been dissipated in 1827, when the tomb beneath the platform of the shrine was opened and examined. This was done in the presence and under the direction of the late Mr. Raine, whose very interesting volume, containing a full account of his discoveries, was published in the following year. In a walled grave immediately under the centre of the platform appeared first the ‘ new coffin ’ made for the relics on their interment in 1542. Within this were the remains of two other coffins ; that added on the translation of 1104, and another showing, by the character and decoration of its fragments, that it was the same in which the remains had been placed at Lindisfarne in 698. With this last coffin was found a human skeleton wrapped in robes which had once been of great richness. These robes, and many relics found among them, were carefully removed. The bones, including a skull found in the inner coffin—no doubt that assigned to St. Oswald—were reinterred in a new chest, and the grave was closed as before. There can be no reasonable doubt that these were the actual remains of St. Cuthbert. It is quite possible that the body may have been incorrupt when it was first disinterred in 698. Instances are known in which, from natural causes, human bodies have remained perfect for a considerable length of time. But it would seem that, probably long before the translation in 1104 (when only one or two persons were allowed to touch it), what passed for the incorrupt St. Cuthbert had been, in truth, a skeleton so

\* *Marmion*, canto ii. stanza 14.

shrouded and enveloped in robes as to give the appearance of an entire body. The cavities of the eyes in the skull of the saint had been filled with round artificial balls of a whitish colour ; indicating, perhaps, that when first the actual body showed signs of collapsing, these balls had been inserted to give the full outline beneath the face-cloth, which no one was ever allowed to raise.

The relics taken from among the robes, and now preserved in the library, comprise, among others, a cross of gold of very ancient form, and set with garnets. It may well have been worn by St. Cuthbert in his lifetime ; but it is more certain that a small portable altar—a square slip of oak plated with silver—is a personal relic of the saint. Only portions of the silver plating remain ; and the oak beneath is inscribed with letters, the form of which shows that the altar was coeval with St. Cuthbert. It was, no doubt, used by him ; and, in accordance with a custom of that age, it may have been placed on his breast at his first interment. A very beautiful stole and maniple, embroidered with figures of saints, and still in wonderful preservation, were doubtless the gifts to St. Cuthbert of the ‘glorious Athelstan’ when he visited the shrine (then at Chester-le-Street), either in 934 or in 937.\* So, too, may have been the robes in which the body was wrapped. The remaining fragments of these show that they were of Eastern, or perhaps of Sicilian, workmanship ; and not (in spite of the water-fowl embroidered on

\* In which year this visit was made is not certain. The Chronicle of Mailros places it in 934, when Constantine, King of Scots, ‘broke the peace,’ and Athelstan went against him with a great host. Simeon of Durham assigns it to the ‘tenth year of Bishop Wigred,’ or 937—the year of the great fight at Brunanburgh. The gifts which Athelstan then bestowed on the saint are enumerated in a charter (Cotton MSS., Claudius, D. 4 ; and Mon, Angl. i. 40), a translation of which is given by Mr. Raine (*St. Cuthbert*, p. 50). A stole and maniple occur among them, besides seven robes (pallia).

them), as Mr. Raine suggests, manufactured expressly for the saint.\*

It is therefore perfectly credible that Durham possessed the actual relics of St. Cuthbert, and that these are still reposing beneath the shadow of his own church. If the tradition of the removal of the body could have lingered in the face of such discoveries, it was effectually disproved by an examination made in 1867. The tradition, it was known, asserted that the body had been buried under the stairs of the bell tower. This place was carefully explored; but no remains were found; and it was evident that the ground had never been disturbed since the construction of the tower.†

The remains of St. Cuthbert and those of the Confessor alone, of all the long line of English saints, still repose in their own churches, and on the very spots where they were anciently revered by crowding pilgrims. And it may be added that there is scarcely another of the greater saints, dating from before the Norman Conquest, whose asserted relics, guarded and honoured as they were, can be shown by such direct evidence to have been authentic. Of the later saints—St. Thomas of Canterbury, St. Hugh, St. William

\* Mr. Raine supposed these birds to represent the eider-duck, which frequents the Farne Islands in great numbers, and was connected in an especial manner with St. Cuthbert. They were called 'St. Cuthbert's ducks' in the days of Reginald, who asserts that the saint, during his solitary life, tamed them, made them of use to him, and sometimes wrought miracles on their behalf. A Durham 'Bursar's roll' for 1380-1, mentions that 12*d.* was paid to a painter from Newcastle for painting 'one of the birds of St. Cuthbert' for the Reredos (Raine, p. 119). In the feretrar's office were 'pillows of Cuthbert down' (*Id.* p. 142).

† There were, it is said, two lines of tradition,—one descending through the Benedictines, another through the Vicars Apostolic (now the Roman Catholic bishops) of the district. It was the secular (or episcopal) tradition which asserted that the body had been buried in the tower. It is hinted that the Benedictine tradition does not agree with the secular.



of York, St. Thomas Cantilupe of Hereford—there is, of course, no question. But an examination of the earlier histories will give us good reason for pausing before we admit that the relics displayed in many a great shrine were in truth what they were declared to be. The two greatest shrines of Eastern England, those of St. Etheldreda and St. Edmund, are in this respect at least doubtful. For more than a century and a half the body of St. Etheldreda had rested in its Roman sarcophagus near the altar of her own church, before the Northmen, in 869, broke like a storm over the land, murdered St. Edmund the East Anglian King, and destroyed the great monasteries of the fens, including Ely. That place remained desolate for some years, until certain of the clergy who had fled, returning, attempted to restore the divine services in the midst of the ruined church. To some extent they did this; but Ely remained ‘sine cultu et reverentia’ until Athelwold of Winchester, the Wykeham of his day, bought and rebuilt it, about the year 935. We have therefore to believe either that the ‘heathen host’ did not, in search of treasure, violate the sepulchre of St. Etheldreda, full in sight as it was, or that it was miraculously preserved. The latter was the record of the Ely historians. There the tradition ran, that a certain ‘pirate,’ fiercer than his brethren, struck at the sarcophagus with his Danish axe, until he had made an opening in the stone. But his eyes instantly started from his head, and he died on the spot,—an awful warning to his fellows. The hole in the sarcophagus, says Richard of Ely, writing about the beginning of the twelfth century, ‘is still to be seen.’\* Setting aside all

\* ‘Quod huc usque apparet.’ (*Historia Eliensis*, p. 602, ap. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, vol. i.) This ‘foramen’ may have given rise to the whole story. The loss of eyesight was a usual punishment of those who dared to lay sacrilegious hands on saints or their relics; thus the eyes of the executioner of St. Alban fall out as he strikes the fatal blow. The Ely narrative sufficiently shows that the monks felt

miracle, however, it is difficult to believe that during the years in which Ely was absolutely deserted, and whilst the heathens were establishing themselves in the country, the tomb of the saint remained untouched. In the case of St. Edmund, the whole story of the finding of his body is legendary; and no life of the saint was written until more than a century after his martyrdom. It was declared that the head had become united to the body, which remained incorrupt, like that of St. Cuthbert. So it was found when Abbot Samson examined it in 1198; and so it was in the days of Abbot Leofstan, shortly before the Conquest, who opened the shrine, and in order to test the story, took the head between his hands, and found it firmly united. But as a punishment his hands were stricken with paralysis. There is no reason, however, for believing that the body, asserted however truly to be that of St. Edmund, was exposed to any risk of loss or destruction after it had once been brought to Beodricesweorth—the earlier name of St. Edmundsbury. When the Danes were plundering East Anglia in 1010, it was conveyed for safety to London; and the very curious timbered church of Greenstead in Essex is supposed to mark one of its resting places on the journey. Yates asserts that Lewis of France, in 1216, is said to have seized and carried back to France with him the body of St. Edmund; but this seems to be a story without foundation, much like that which declared that the relics of St. Alban had been carried off into Sweden.

If the relics in the shrines of St. Etheldreda and St. Edmund were of doubtful authenticity, far more is this the case with those exhibited at St. Alban's. We have seen that there is no very good evidence to prove that such a person as St. Alban ever existed. Still the tradition, traceable apparently up to the

the preservation of St. Etheldreda's relics through the period of the Danish ravages to be a difficulty, and that they were anxious to account for it.

time of Germanus and Lupus (125 years after the Diocletian persecution), must be allowed its due weight. But the question of the relics introduces us to a region altogether 'supra historicam.' Nearly five hundred years after the death of the martyr, Offa of Mercia 'fell in sweven' as he lay on his bed in the city of Bath, and was warned by an angel to raise from the earth and to enshrine the relics of St. Alban. The place at Verulamium, where they had been hidden from the fury of the English conquerors, had long been forgotten,\* and Offa and his bishops were at last guided to it by a miraculous light. They found the relics in a wooden chest, which also included relics 'of all the Apostles and divers martyrs' placed in it by Germanus.† It was in consequence of this dream and discovery that Offa, according to the questionable authority of the Life assigned to Matthew Paris, founded the monastery on the place of St. Alban's martyrdom, and provided a rich shrine for the precious relics. They can have been neither more nor less authentic than those of St. Amphibalus, a fellow-martyr whose name is due to Geoffrey of Monmouth, and who seems to have been manufactured out of the cloak—'amphibalus'—of St. Alban. His remains, together with those of nine other martyrs, were

\* 'Fuerat namque locus, et memoria martyris post adventum S. Germani . . . omnino deleta' (M. Paris, *Vita Offæ Secundi*, p. 983). 'Locus autem sepulchri et loci distincti cognitio, penitus delebatur' (*id. id.*). This was about the year 793. Bede, writing in 731, asserts that miracles were in his day wrought in the church of St. Alban (*H. E.*, i. 6). But even the locality of this church seems to have been forgotten. In 1257 a tomb was discovered at the east end of the great conventual church, which was held to be that in which St. Alban had been laid on the day of his martyrdom, and, of course, that in which his relics were found by Offa. (M. Paris, p. 809.)

† Constantius (*Vita Germani*, quoted in Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, p. 5) asserts that Germanus placed in the sepulchre of St. Alban 'omnium Apostolorum diversorumque martyrum reliquias.' This passage is the most direct evidence remaining to prove that such a person as St. Alban ever existed.



'invented' in 1178; and when the shrine of St. Alban was brought out of the church to meet them, it became so light that it seemed to 'fly rather than to be conveyed on the shoulders of its bearers;' whereas, on ordinary occasions, it was difficult even to lift it.\*

In two remarkable cases, the possession of the same saint was claimed by two far separated churches. Ripon and Canterbury both claimed St. Wilfrid. Archbishop Odo himself asserts that he removed the bones of the saint to Canterbury; whilst the shrine of St. Wilfred was, until the sixteenth century, one of the greatest treasures of Ripon. These rival claims may perhaps be fairly explained; but it is difficult to suppose anything short of actual fraud in the case of St. Dunstan, claimed by both Glastonbury and Canterbury. It was known that St. Dunstan had been buried in his own cathedral at Canterbury; and Eadmer declared that he had himself seen his coffin, inviolate, on its translation after the building of Lanfranc's church. But the Glastonbury monks (audacious claimers of relics) insisted that Dunstan's relics had been removed to the monastery after the Danish sack of Canterbury in 1011, and had then been hidden. The great Church of Glastonbury was burnt in 1184. Funds were needed for its rebuilding; and it became desirable, accordingly, to 'find' the hidden relics of St. Dunstan. They were 'found,' therefore, buried in an iron box, and were enshrined with great solemnity. A great dispute concerning these

\* Matt. Paris, p. 113. Some relics, said to be of St. Alban, are preserved in the church of S. Maria at Cologne. It is asserted that they were taken from the tomb by Germanus of Auxerre, and carried to Rome, whence they were brought to Cologne by Theophania, wife of Otto II., Emperor of Germany. But Constantius says nothing about the removal of any such relics. (See the *Guardian* newspaper, Sept. 13 and Oct. 25, 1871.) If there was ever a real St. Alban, his remains are probably still somewhere near Verulamium. The relics contained in the shrine are said to have been removed to Rome after the dissolution.

relics took place long afterwards between the Archbishop and the Abbot of Glastonbury. The Canterbury shrine was examined in 1508, and found to contain all the bones. But Abbot Bere still insisted that the true relics were in his possession. All the neighbourhood, he declares, flocked to the shrine on St. Dunstan's festival. 'And should any one refuse to do so, and attend to his work or affairs, nothing prospers with him in that year, and grave injury results to his property and his family.' 'Whoever,' he adds, 'saw the earnest concourse of people daily supplicating at this shrine with bare feet and garments cast aside, would say, "Let them alone, lest haply we be found even to fight against God."' The Archbishop, by no means converted, declared that strong measures should be taken to remedy the scandal; but a stronger hand speedily intervened, and the rival shrines perished together. A diaper work of open lilies still marks the place of St. Dunstan's shrine in Canterbury Cathedral.

It is certainly, as Professor Willis has remarked, a suspicious fact that the rebuilding of a church—sometimes the foundation of a new one—was often accompanied by the discovery of a saint's body, or by some especial marvel wrought before the ancient shrine.\* One of the most wonderful discoveries was that of the body of St. Ivo (the St. Ives of Huntingdonshire †), the resting-place of which was revealed to a certain smith (*cuidam fabro*) soon after the monastery of Ramsey had been founded, at the end of the tenth century, by Ædnoth and Ailwin the ealdorman whom the Ramsey monks called the 'friend of God.' The existence of this

\* *Archit. History of Glastonbury*, p. 24.

† The St. Ives of Cornwall was a different person. He was a Breton and according to the hymn for his office a 'lawyer':—

' Sanctus Ivo erat Brito,  
Advocatus sed non latro,  
Res miranda populo.'

St. Ivo is a pure fiction ; and when he revealed his own tomb in a vision, he seems also to have added that he was a Persian bishop.\* So, at least, he was held to have been at 'Ramsey the rich,' where his supposed relics were translated by Ædnoth, and doubtless, in Fuller's words, 'brought much grist to the mill.' Indeed, a peculiar morality was gradually developed in the whole matter of relics. They were of so great value to the church which displayed them, and the belief in their miraculous powers had worked itself so deeply into the religion of the times, that it was held a good and pious deed to obtain possession of them in any manner—'si possis recte, si non, quocunque modo.' Thus Durham obtained the relics of the Venerable Bede by the stratagem of its monk Elfrid, who for many years visited Jarrow on the day of Bede's death (when his remains were exhibited), apparently for purposes of devotion, but really in hope of carrying off the relics. At last he succeeded, and Jarrow, without remedy, was left to mourn her loss.† A favourite plan was 'to make heavy with drink' the keepers of the shrine, so that the 'pious robbers and faithful thieves,' as the successful foragers called themselves—the losers, no doubt, went more directly to the point—were able to make off with their spoil unsuspected. Thus, when the body of Eadnoth, Bishop of Dorchester, killed in the battle of Assandun, was brought to Ely on its way for interment at Ramsey, the guards who protected it were made drunk, and the body, held to be that of a martyr, was secretly buried at Ely, and was afterwards raised to the dignity of a shrine.‡ The historian, who reports this with approbation, also reports with far higher approval the translation or the 'faithful theft' of the body of St. Withburga from Dereham, in Norfolk, to Ely. Withburga, like

\* See Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, p. 31, note b.

† *Simeon Dunelm.*, cap. 42.

‡ *Liber Eliensis*, p. 189.



Etheldreda of Ely, was one of the many sainted daughters of Anna, king of the East Anglians. She was buried at East Dereham, where she had established a church and convent, and where she was venerated for many generations. At last Edgar gave Dereham to Ely, lately restored by Bishop Athelwold. Abbot Brithnoth determined to remove to the new church 'illud præclarissimum monile ecclesiæ' the body of Withburga; but he feared the men of Dereham, and proceeded with due caution. He arrived at Dereham with a body of armed followers, and invited the inhabitants to a great feast, at which he 'filled them with wine.' At night, when all had well drunken and were asleep, 'God's robber' (Dei prædo), as the abbot is called, 'ready for this holy sacrilege, this faithful theft, this supplanting of Jacob's blessing,' entered the church, opened the tomb, and carried off the body of Withburga. His armed men and clerks surrounded the carriage on which it was placed, rejoicing like conquerors over their prey. The men of Dereham awoke to find their treasure gone. Like the ark of God, they cried, it had been carried off by the Philistines. They roused the country with horn and clamour, and pursued in hot haste, but did not come in sight of the 'Philistines' until the relics of Withburga had been embarked on the Ouse at Brandon. The pursuers lined the river on either side, flinging darts and javelins at the 'robbers.' The abbot hardly escaped, and even the body of the saint was endangered. But, in spite of the tumult and continued attack, the abbot reached his own territory in safety. A great company of men and women poured forth from Ely to meet the new treasure; and Withburga, with the utmost joy and festivity, was placed in the church by the side of her more famous sister.\*

But however obtained, and however doubtful its authenticity, the body of a saint, when once recognized, was a

\* *Liber Eliensis*, pp. 164—167.

treasure of infinite value to the church which possessed it, and, in the case of the greater shrines, was a protection to the whole surrounding country. The saint knew how to care for and to defend his own. Reflecting the feudal and warlike character of the age, he was constantly regarded as a great baron, the head of his followers—a distinction which in some legends is given even to St. Peter and to Zebedee, a ‘mighty baron’ of Galilee, whose sons fished for pleasure, and not for profit.\* ‘Monseigneur St. George’ and ‘My Lord St. James’ more than once appeared on horseback in the battle-field, like the ‘twin brethren’ at the Lake Regillus, fighting for the Christians against the Spanish Moors. They wore full armour, and the surcoat of St. James was covered with scallop shells—the emblems which pilgrims carried from Compostella.† So St. Edmund, when King Sweyne had demanded a heavy tribute from Bury, and threatened destruction to the church and town if it were not paid, took the defence on himself, and, just as Sweyne was beginning his march from Gainsborough, appeared to him in full harness, coming against him with a spear in his hand. ‘Help,’ cried Sweyne; ‘fellow-soldiers, Saint Edmund is coming to slay me!’ And as the saint ran him through, he fell from his horse, and died the same night in torments.‡ So, too, when Henry Earl of Essex, head of the great house of Mandeville, was fighting Robert of Montfort in wager of battle on an island in the Thames, near Reading, he beheld St. Edmund fully armed, his countenance fierce and threatening, floating

\* Freeman, *Hist. of the Norm. Conquest*, i. 279. In the *Romance of Parise la Duchesse* the combatants Milès and Berengiers swear to the truth of their statements on

‘. . . la chase del baron San Martin,  
Cet del baron San Gile, et del cor Saint Firmin.’—p. 53.

† A. de Morgan, s. a. 1225. (Luard’s Ed., pp. 34-5).

‡ Freeman, *Norm. Cong.*, i. 403. The story is told by Florence of Worcester.

in the air above the river, and attended by a certain Gilbert de Cerville, whose death Earl Henry had caused. Henry had made no gifts to the house of St. Edmund, and had even oppressed it. Hence the martyred king appeared at this moment of peril, took all strength from the earl, and caused his entire defeat.\* King Edmund could assail his enemies with sword and lance; but other saints had their own protective weapons, which they were not slow to use. The three sainted Abbesses of Ely killed with the points of their pastoral staves a servant of Picot, Norman sheriff of Cambridgeshire, who had greatly troubled the men of St. Etheldreda.† St. Cuthbert, when the Norman soldiers were advancing towards his holy territory, spread a thick mist over the earth, so that they were unable to cross the Tees; and when afterwards the Conqueror himself, returning from Scotland, visited Durham, and insisted on ascertaining whether the saint's incorrupt body really rested there, he was seized with a violent fever on the very day appointed for the inspection, rushed from the church, and, mounting his horse, never drew bridle until he had passed the bounds of the bishoprick.‡ Fulke de Breaute, one of the fiercest of King John's 'robbers,' who had plundered the town of St. Alban's, and killed a man at the entrance of the church, dreamt some time afterwards that a mighty stone fell like a thunderbolt (in modum fulguris) from St. Alban's tower, and ground him to powder.

\* Jocelin de Brakelonda, p. 50.

† Thomas Eliensis, ap. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, i. p. 611.

‡ *Simeon Dunelm.*, cap. 54. Mr. Raine suggests that we may exclaim with Hubert in *King John*—

'The king, I fear, is poisoned by a monk.'

'After this,' says Hegge, in his curious *Legend*, 'the king had a reverend opinion of St. Cuthbert.' It is certain that the church of Durham was much benefited by the Conqueror, whose charters are still preserved in the Treasury. But the whole story is legendary. (See Freeman, *Norm. Conq.*, iv. 520.)



His wife persuaded him to ask the saint's forgiveness, and Fulke accordingly presented himself before the chapter of monks, without his upper garments, and holding a rod in his hand. He was absolved, and kissed all the monks. But he made no restitution, and died afterwards of a poisoned fish, suffering the vengeance of the martyr.\* Stories such as these, which might be multiplied almost without number, sufficiently indicate that, in those ages of storm and rapine, the dread of a saint's vengeance and the reputation of his power were of no slight assistance in protecting his halidom, and in producing that comparative peace which for the most part reigned in the neighbourhood of a great shrine. In fact, with a feeling which takes us back to the days of the Nials and Gunnars, when it was held that the old Northern hero rested in some mysterious half-life within the recesses of his grave-mound, the shrine was regarded as the home of the Christian saint, from which he frequently emerged, and within which he was alive to the prayers and vows of his worshippers. A window in Canterbury Cathedral represents Becket issuing from his shrine in full pontificals to sing mass at a neighbouring altar. St. Edmund on one occasion was seen leaving his shrine in armour, and then returning to it with his sword drawn and bloody, as though he had smitten his enemies; and St. Alban, by issuing from and returning to his shrine, testified that his relics were safe in his own church,†

\* Matt. Paris, p. 246, and *post.*, p. 238, where the story is told with some variation. 'Utinam non adhuc conterat eum lapis iste in inferno plurimum formidabilis,' adds the historian. A singular fate befell one Herbert Duket, 'possessionibus Beati Albani infestus,' who, passing one day before the high altar (and therefore in front of the shrine) was suddenly reduced to the height and size of a monkey (vix simiæ retineret quantitatem), whereas before he had been a man of lofty stature. 'Ita quod nomini ejus cognomentum Duket per contrarium adjiceretur.' He was restored on promising to make satisfaction 'Deo et sancto Martyri.'—M. Paris, *Vit. Abbat.*, p. 1017.

† Matt. Paris, *Vitæ Abbat.*, p. 997. 'Ecce ego Albanus hic quiesco,' exclaimed the saint. 'Nonne me vidisti de meo feretro exire?'

and not in Sweden or at Ely. Spoliation of the shrine in which the saint thus rested, although, as we have seen, not altogether unknown, became a crime, the perpetrators of which could not hope to escape unscathed. Certain monks, who, obeying the wicked will of Bishop Nigel, ventured to take part of the gold and other metals from the shrine of St. Etheldreda, were, we are told, variously punished, one of them by an attack of gout—‘quem medici podagra græce nuncupant.’\* When Cœur de Lion was a captive in Germany, and the treasures of England were gathered for his ransom, the Abbot of St. Edmund’s refused to sanction any stripping of the shrine. ‘The doors of the church shall be opened,’ he said; ‘he may enter who will—he may approach who dares.’ The justiciaries would not venture. ‘St. Edmund,’ they declared, ‘displays his anger against many who are absent and at a distance. Far more angry will he be with those who are present, and try to take his coat from him.’†

The saint was thus in a sense the head of his barony, and was represented by the bishop or abbot in whose church his shrine was erected. The followers of the feudal lord were the ‘men of St. Cuthbert,’ ‘St. Edmund,’ or ‘St. Etheldreda;’ and many privileges fell to their lot, which could not be claimed by the men of more secular baronies. They were in an especial manner the guardians of the shrine. The men of St. Cuthbert’s halidom, known as ‘haliworfolc,’ ‡ resisted the ‘ban’ of their powerful bishop, Anthony Bek, and declared that they held their lands for the defence of St. Cuthbert’s body, and were not bound to go beyond Tyne or Tees for either king or bishop,§ a claim which was certainly

\* Ric. Elien., ap. *Anglia Sacra*, i. 626.

† Jocelin de Brakelonda, p. 71. ‘Qui tunicam suam ei auferre voluerint.’

‡ i.e. ‘Holy Ward Folk.’

§ Robert de Graystones (*Ang. Sac.*, i. p. 749).



not insisted on, and which, on that border district, would have been at times full of danger. They professed to be descendants, or at least representatives, of the laymen of Lindisfarne, who, when St. Cuthbert's body was conveyed thence in 875 for fear of the Northmen, followed it through all its wanderings, and at length settled in the heart of ancient Deira. In time of war they rallied under the banner of St. Cuthbert, one of the most famous of those holy standards which belonged to, and were hung above, every great shrine. In the earlier Christian ages, the shrine itself, or some portion of the relics, was frequently carried in the 'host,' and stationed on some high ground overlooking the battle-field, where, like the uplifted arm of Moses, it might bless and influence those who fought for it. Thus the shrine of St. Wendreda was carried from Ely to the field of Assandun, where, with other relics, it was lost, and never recovered.\* On special occasions, relics were carried on the person of a great leader. William, at Hastings, wore round his neck a reliquary containing certain of the saintly remains on which Harold had sworn his famous oath.† But the greater shrines were rarely moved, and the display of the actual relics was gradually superseded by that of the consecrated banner, specially belonging to the saint, and sometimes containing some lesser memorial of him. The great prototype of such banners was the 'Vexillum Regis'—the 'standard of the King' himself—the supposed true cross of our Lord. At once a standard and a relic, it was frequently carried to victory in the host of the Crusaders, until, at the battle of Hattin (July 4th, 1187), it was taken by Saladin; ‡ and its

\* *Liber Eliensis*, p. 196.

† Freeman, *Norm. Conq.*, iii. p. 463, from William of Poitiers. A rib of St. Rumold was once, with the best results, fastened into the shield of a knight who was fighting for Mechlin, under the walls of the city. (Sollerius, *Vita et Mirac. S. Rumoldi*).

‡ *Itin. Regis Ricardi*, l. i. p. 15 (ed. Stubbs).

loss, heard with horror throughout Christendom, was one of the great incitements to the crusade in which the 'Athleta Dei,' Richard the Lion-Heart, won his brightest renown. St. Cuthbert had, doubtless, a banner from an early period; but after the battle of Neville's Cross (1346), when David King of Scots was defeated, some change was made in it. On that occasion the Prior of Durham had been warned in vision to fasten on the point of a spear 'the holy corporax cloth wherewith St. Cuthbert covered the chalice when he used to say mass,' and to display it on the Red Hills, close outside the city, and within sight of the battle-field.\* The victory was mainly attributed to this relic; and it was afterwards fastened into the centre of a banner covered with white velvet, on which was laid a cross of red. This was the 'banner of St. Cuthbert,' which was carried against Scotland by Richard II. and by Henry IV., which waved over the men of the bishoprick at Flodden, and which, after the dissolution, was 'despitefully burned in her fire' by the wife of Dean Whittingham, 'to the open contempt and disgrace of all ancient reliques.' A somewhat similar fate, no doubt, befell the great saints' banners of Yorkshire—those of St. Peter of York, of St. John of Beverley, and of St. Wilfrid of Ripon. These were of great antiquity. The banner of St. John was carried into Scotland by Athelstan, who regarded himself as under the special protection of the saint; and on his return, victorious, offered on the altar of his shrine the sword he had wielded in the great battle of Brunanburgh. The three banners gave name to the 'Battle of the Standard' (1138), in which David of Scotland was defeated. On this occasion they were suspended from a tall mast, crowned by a silver crucifix and a pyx containing the consecrated host, and raised on a four-wheeled platform, like the 'carroccio,' or carriage, which bore the standard of so many Italian cities.

\* *Description of the Ancient Monuments of Durham* (Raine), p. 107

Round this platform—the place of which during the battle is still known as ‘Standard Hill’\*—gathered the English host; and from it Walter l’Espece addressed the barons ‘with a voice like a trumpet,’ and Ralph, Bishop of Orkney, gave absolution to all who should fall in the coming fight. The Scots were broken and fled in disorder, and the victory was mainly attributed to the power of the saints whose banners rose in full sight of the combatants.†

With something of the same feeling that provided a banner for the saint himself, the greater shrines were frequently adorned with standards taken in battle, and suspended near them as thank-offerings. Richard I., who had visited St. Edmund’s as a pilgrim before his departure for the Holy Land in 1189, offered at the shrine there, on his return, the ‘precious banner’ taken from Isaac Comnenus, the so-called Emperor of Cyprus.‡ At St. Cuthbert’s shrine hung the banner and ‘ancient’ of the King of Scots, taken at the battle of Neville’s Cross, and offered to the saint by the Lord Neville, together with his own victorious standard. At Canterbury, a crescent of some hard foreign wood may still be seen fixed on the roof of the Cathedral, immediately above the ancient place of the shrine of St. Thomas. It has been conjectured that it formed the centre of a group of standards, taken by the Crusaders, and offered to St. Thomas ‘of Acre,’ as the archbishop was sometimes called. Banners like these were attached to the shrine in various ways; and, as at Durham, it was frequently surrounded by the standards of

\* Standard Hill is about three miles north of Northallerton. A farm near it is called ‘Scot Pits,’ from the burial trenches of the Scots who fell in the battle.

† Ailred of Rievaulx, *De bello Standardi*, ap. Twysden, *Decem Scriptores*.

‡ ‘Inde peregre profectus ad sanctum Edmundum obtulit ibi illud pretiosum vexillum quod fuit Imperatoris Cypri.—*Itinerarium Regis Ricardi*, p. 446 (ed. Stubbs).



neighbouring knights and barons, who thus placed themselves and their followers under the immediate protection of the local saint.

In connexion with the chief shrine—sometimes in almeries ranged about the platform on which it stood, as at Durham; sometimes hung above it, as we have seen was the case at St. Edmund's; sometimes in vaulted recesses beneath or near it, as at Winchester, where the vault beneath the platform of St. Swithun's shrine is still called the 'Holy Hole'—lesser relics of various descriptions were arranged, often in reliquaries of the utmost richness. Here also were preserved some of the larger and more cumbrous offerings to the saint, which could not well be attached to the shrine itself. Such probably was the golden crown of Scotland, taken from John Balliol at Dover, and offered to St. Thomas of Canterbury by Edward I. Such, without doubt, was the 'black rood of Scotland'—a famous crucifix of blackened silver, which, after the rout of Neville's Cross, fell into the hands of the English, and became an appendage of the shrine of St. Cuthbert. All these almeries were opened, and the reliquaries displayed, when the 'cooperculum' was lifted from the great shrine, and pilgrims were permitted to approach it.

A complete list of the relics which surrounded the Durham shrine was made by the shrine-keeper in 1383, and has been printed by Mr. Raine.\* Among many noticeable rarities, 'griffins' eggs' frequently occur; and as the 'green cope of St. Cuthbert,' in which he was wrapped before his translation by Bishop Flambard, was ornamented with griffins, and as certain robes manufactured for Bishop Hugh de Puiset were profusely covered with them, it has been suggested that the griffin was in some special manner connected with St. Cuthbert.† This may have been so. But the griffins' (which

\* *Id. id.* p. 121.

† Two claws of a griffin were shown with the eggs among the



were, in truth, ostriches') eggs preserved in the almeries were frequently used as reliquaries, and were suspended near other shrines besides that of St. Cuthbert. They were brought by pilgrims and Crusaders from the East, and a certain mysterious character was assigned to them by Greek and Oriental Christians, from whom the use of them in Western Europe was adopted. Ostrich eggs may still be seen in some Greek churches.\* They are said to symbolize at once faith and the constant attention of the Creator to the universe, according to a strange but beautiful fable that the ostrich hatches its eggs by gazing steadfastly at them: a story which Southey has used in 'Thalaba,' where Oneiza gazes at the 'chosen youth'—

'. . . even with such a look as fables say  
The mother ostrich fixes on her egg  
Till that intense affection  
Kindle its light of life.'†

To complete the picture of a great shrine we must imagine it hung round with 'ex voto' offerings of wax or of metal, representing, according to a custom still followed in some Italian churches, either the persons themselves who had been miraculously cured, or had received some special favour from the saint;‡ or, more frequently, the arm, hand, leg, or other

Durham relics. 'In the British Museum is a horn of the Egyptian ibex, more than two feet in length, and on its silver rim is engraved in letters of the 16th century, "Gryphi unguis Divo Cuthberto Dunelmensi sacer." Casley mentions a cup (? sic) as being in the Bodleian Library, 4 feet long, with the same inscription.' (W. H. D.) Longstaffe on Bp. Pudsey's (de Puiset's) buildings at Durham, in *Transac. of Archit. and Archæol. Soc. of Durham and Northumberland*, 1862.

\* Tozer's *Highlands of Turkey*, i. 80. Three ostrich eggs filled with relics were among the gifts of Magnus of Sweden and his queen to the church of Wadstena, where was the shrine of the Swedish St. Brita, or Bridget.—Marryatt's *Sweden*, i. 305.

† *Thalaba*, bk. iii. 24.

‡ In the church of S. Maria delle Grazie, near Mantua, many such large waxen figures are hung up. They are fully dressed. Among

member restored to health, such as we see so often about the shrines of Belgium or of Brittany. From these representations, animals were by no means excluded. St. Edmund and St. Etheldreda were powerful protectors of all cattle and 'live stock,' within their own domains; and among the 'miracula' which attested the saintly claims of the great Earl, Simon of Montfort, are many stories relating to the stable and the 'basse-cour.' Thus we are told that 'the old Countess of Gloucester' had a palfrey which had been asthmatic for two years; until one day, in journeying from Tewkesbury to Evesham, it drank from the Earl's well, and was restored to perfect health. When a chick which belonged to Agnes of Selgrave fell into a pond and was drowned, she pulled it out and commended it to the 'blessed Simon,' whereupon it got up and walked about as usual; and a peacock which had by chance been injured was miraculously healed by the same powerful intercession; so that the good woman to whom it belonged felt herself in duty bound to offer its tail before the tomb at Evesham.\* In most cases such offerings and waxen figures can hardly have been attached to the actual shrine. They must have been hung on the surrounding piers, and in some instances have been suspended from the vaulting; whilst the shrine towered in the midst, reflecting from its gilded and polished surfaces the blaze of waxen torches burning day and night around it.

The name of the local saint was always a favourite in his own district. Hence the many Cuthberts of the North, the

them are Charles V., Philip II., Pope Pius II., and the Constable Bourbon. Some are 'ex votos' from persons with the Constable's army. There were formerly similar figures in the church of the Annonciade at Florence, among which a full-length of Duke Alexander was moulded by Benvenuto Cellini. They were hung from the roof.—Valery, *Voyage en Italie*, t. i.

\* 'Miracula Simonis de Montfort,' appended to the Camden Society's edition of *William of Rishanger*.

Wilfrids of old Yorkshire houses, and the Edmunds and Audreys (the form which *Ætheldrythe* or *Etheldreda* took among the people) so common in Eastern England. The great saint of Canterbury stretched his influence more widely. It was owing to his national reputation that the name of Thomas—on which Southey has rung so many pleasant changes in ‘the Doctor’—became so general, and was so variously applied. The Plantagenet Edwards were named from the royal Confessor. Henry III., who rebuilt his minster and translated his relics, gave his name to the son who succeeded on the English throne and became the greatest of his race. To the same king is due the restoration to the royal house of another saintly name, which had been borne by one at least of the worthiest heroes whose deeds are recorded in old English history. But Edmund, son of Henry III. and Eleanor of Savoy (born on St. Marcellus’ day, 1245), was not named in honour either of Edmund Ironside or of the sainted king of East Anglia. His ‘patron’ was Edmund Rich, Archbishop of Canterbury (1234—1240), who, after a life and episcopate of great excellence, despairing of his country, then groaning under that foreign yoke which was at last lifted by the war of the Barons, fled to the Cistercian house of Pontigny (where Becket had before him taken refuge), and died there (November 16, 1240). In 1246 this second St. Edmund was canonized by the Pope at Lyons; and his shrine, which it is said still contains his relics, occupies even now the place of honour in the church of Pontigny. Edmund (afterwards titular King of Sicily) was born and named in the year before the archbishop’s canonization, but some time after his sanctity had been recognized.\* In 1254, nine years later, Henry III. and his queen made a solemn

\* By the Pope, and apparently by Henry. But St. Edmund’s enemies in England did all they could to prevent the canonization.—*Matt. Paris*, p. 556.

pilgrimage to Pontigny. Lewis of France (Saint Lewis) had only just returned from his crusade. He met the King of England at Orleans; but Henry would not allow Lewis to conduct him to Pontigny, nor would he then turn aside to visit the great barons of France, saying that it was not fit to do so while he was St. Edmund's pilgrim. On his return he was received at Paris with the utmost splendour. A great company of nobles and bishops was assembled in his honour, and the two kings—alike in much, yet so really different—spent many days in feasting and discourse. King Lewis gave Henry an elephant which he had brought from the East, the first, says Matthew Paris, ever seen in England, and the people flocked in crowds to wonder at it, as it was conducted from Dover to London.\*

Whilst every great road in the kingdom was in some sense a 'pilgrim's way,' and on the recurrence of certain festivals was thronged by persons hastening to the shrine of the local saint, it is noteworthy that in more than one case a very ancient line of bye-road was adopted on some occasions by the pilgrims. The 'pilgrims' path' running along the south flank of the north downs, extending through Surrey and Kent, and probably connected at its west end with Southampton, has been carefully traced by Mr. Albert Way, and was no doubt the road by which pilgrims from the west and those who landed at Southampton, frequently approached the shrine of St. Thomas. Another ancient track, running by Newmarket, Brandon, and Castle Acre, (not unconnected with the old Icenhilde way,) was known as the 'Palmer's Way,' or 'Walsingham Green Way,' and was used by pilgrims to the great Norfolk shrine. Such roads, although it is now difficult to trace them, were well marked, and were perhaps

\* M. Paris records the arrival of the elephant. The pilgrimage of Henry and Eleanor is apparently mentioned only in the *Burton Annals*, ad. ann. 1254 (Luard's edition, pp. 327—329).

better 'bridle paths' than the more frequently traversed king's highway. In disturbed times they may have been safer ; and strangers travelling along them were less subject than on the greater roads to the attacks of thieves and outlaws, who, like Will Scarlet and Much the Miller's son, came down

' To Watling Street to take a prey,"

and who were always on the look-out for the purses of wealthy pilgrims. Yet the Watling Street itself, which crossed the country from Chester to London, and extended thence by Canterbury to the sea, was the road by which Chaucer's famous company of pilgrims advanced to Canterbury ; and it seems to have been the great use of this road as a pilgrims' way, which caused the occasional application of its name to the Galaxy,—

' Lo there (quod he) cast up thine eye,  
Se yonder, lo, the Galaxie,  
The which men clepe the milky way,  
For it is white, and some parfay  
Ycallin it han Watlingestrete.\*

At any rate, the Galaxy in this and other countries has been constantly connected with the greater lines of pilgrimage. One of its Turkish names is 'the Hadjis way,' as indicating the road to Mecca. In Italy, in France, and in the north of Europe, it has been called St. Jago's way—Jacobsstrasse—the road to Compostella ; and in Norfolk it became the 'Walsingham way'—the long streaming path of light that pointed toward the great shrine of the Virgin.

Along all the lines of road used by the pilgrims, wayside chapels and lesser shrines were gradually established, some of which are of much interest. At Dartford, on the way to Canterbury, there was a small chantry of St. Edmund, to visit which the pilgrims of St. Thomas usually turned aside,

\* Chaucer, *House of Fame*.



and which became of so great repute on its own account that the Watling Street towards London is occasionally referred to as 'St. Edmund's way.' At Houghton-le-Dale, a little south of Walsingham, is a small and beautiful chapel of the 14th century, where pilgrims coming from the south confessed and were shriven before advancing to the shrine. The most remarkable of these chapels, however, since in some respects it is unique in this country, is the Chapel of the Red Mount at Kings Lynn. This is a small stone building of three stories, built in the form of an equal armed cross, but encased by an octagonal shell of brick. The chapel itself, which seems to have contained a much-honoured figure of the Virgin, is on the upper story, and is approached by a double staircase within the octagonal casing. By one stair the pilgrims mounted, made their offerings, and leaving the chapel by another door, descended by the stair opposite. The date of this curious shrine is 1485. It resembles in its arrangements a small chapel of St. Hubert which exists at Amboise.

It has already been said that Kent and Norfolk were especially rich in such local shrines as this. The lower panels of the Norfolk rood screens, some of which remain in a very perfect condition, display a series of saintly figures more various, and in some respects more peculiar, than any which can be found elsewhere. Among them appears 'Good King Harry,' the unfortunate Henry VI., whose effigy was placed in many Yorkshire and east country churches, and was resorted to by pilgrims 'to be cured of their diseases,' perhaps with special reference to the king's evil. Another remarkable figure is that of Sir John Shorne, or 'Maister John Shorne,' a Benedictine of Canterbury, and Rector of North Marston in Buckinghamshire, where he died, and where he had a well and a shrine so greatly frequented by pilgrims that the chancel of the church is said to have been rebuilt



from their offerings. 'Maister John' on one occasion 'conveyed' the devil into a boot—a legend which belongs to a class dwelt on at length in Grimm's 'Mythologie.' The story was portrayed in the east window of his church; and on the Norfolk screens he appears holding a long black boot, from which emerges the grim figure of the evil one.\*

The hostelrys in which pilgrims were entertained, numerous about every important shrine, and on the road to it; the 'tokens' fastened into their hats,—such as the leaden bottles of water from St. Thomas's well, or St. Etheldreda's chains, made of fine silk; the great fairs held annually on the translation festivals, when the 'pax sancti' was maintained with especial strictness, or the more permanent booths, such as those of the Mercery at Canterbury, or the 'tawdry' (St. Audrey) stalls at Ely, where pilgrims might obtain various memorials of their visit;†—on all these subjects there is much to be said, although they can here be only named.

Long before the religious changes of the sixteenth century the zeal for pilgrimages had greatly lessened. The 'scent of the morning air' made itself felt in that direction, as in so many others, before the great shrines were altogether removed; so that, for the most part, there was little strong feeling excited by the spoliation and destruction of the shrines, or by the appropriation of their vast wealth. We may well wish that, in many respects, the destruction had been less complete, and that we had followed the example of some other countries at least as eager for reform as our own. In Sweden many reliquaries are still preserved: and the silver

\* A curious notice of Sir John Thorne, by the Rev. W. Sparrow Simpson, will be found in the *Journal of the Archaeological Association*, vol. xxiii. See Grimm's *D. Mythol.*, p. 963.

† Dean Stanley in his *Memorials of Canterbury*, and Mr. J. G. Nichols, in notes to the Colloquy of Erasmus, *Peregrinatio Religiosis ergo*, have treated these subjects at some length.

shrine of St. Eric, the great patron of the country, occupies its ancient position on the left side of the altar in Upsala Cathedral.\* But the change itself was inevitable. Whatever good had been bound up with the earlier reverence for saintly shrines had long passed away. The multitude of so-called patrons and protectors obscured all truth; and we are reminded of the old dramatist's noble lines :—

‘ . . . Superstition  
Doth violate the deity it worships  
No less than scorn doth; and believe it, brother,  
The use of things is all, and not the store.  
Surfeit and fulness have killed more than famine;  
The sparrow with his little plumage flies,  
While the proud peacock, overcharged with pens,  
Is fain to sweep the ground with his grown train  
And load of feathers.’†

\* Marryatt's *Sweden*, ii. 153. The shrine was opened in 1699 in compliment to the Polish Ambassador, who kissed the relics one by one, and said some fine things to Olaus Rudbeck, who was present, about his *Atlantica*.

† Ben Jonson, *The Staple of News*, act 5, sc. the last.

## VI.

### TRAVELLING IN ENGLAND.\*

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SIR HILDEBRAND JACOB, author, in the early part of the last century, of some plays and poems long since forgotten, is said to have had 'a pleasant mode of travelling.' When the spring was somewhat advanced, and the roads had become tolerably passable (MacAdam was as yet unthought of), Sir Hildebrand and his servant

'set off with a portmanteau, and without knowing whither they were going. Towards evening, when they came to a village, they enquired if the great man loved books and had a good library; and if the answer was in the affirmative, Sir Hildebrand sent his compliments, that he was come to see him; and then he used to stay till he was disposed to move farther. In this manner he travelled through the greatest part of England, scarcely ever sleeping at an inn, unless when town or village did not afford one person civilised enough to be glad to see a gentleman and a scholar.'<sup>†</sup>

Squires of the latter class, whose *bibliothèque*, like that of the Spanish Cura, lay for the most part in their cellars, must have been frequently encountered; but there seem to have been 'civilised persons' enough to make the travelling 'very pleasant;' and, on the other hand, the solitude of the old hall, or of the parsonage nestled among its elms, must have been agreeably broken by the arrival of such a stranger. Nevertheless, modern travellers can hardly be advised to follow Sir Hildebrand's example. The notification of their arrival and intended visit would draw forth, it may be feared, unsatis-

\* *Quarterly Review*, July, 1864.

† Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, ii. 61, note.

factory replies from the most civilised persons in these days. English hospitality has changed its character with railways and improved travelling, although it is probably far from true that it has in any way diminished.

Such a traveller as Sir Hildebrand was, indeed, in his own time, a rarity. The complaint that English people know little of their own country is, at least, as old as the days of Lord Burleigh, who, when any one came to the Lords of the Council for a licence to travel abroad, such as was then necessary, 'would first examine him of England, and, if he found him ignorant, would bid him stay at home and know that countrey first.' 'While I wander in foraigne history,' continues Peacham, who tells the story in his 'Compleat Gentleman' (1622),

'let me warne you, *ne sis peregrinus domi*, that you bee not a stranger in the history of your owne countrey, which is a common fault imputed to our English travellers in forreine countries; who, curious in the observation and search of the most memorable things and monuments of other places, can say (as a great Peere of France told me) nothing of their owne;—our countrey of England being no whit inferior to any other in the world for matter of antiquity and rarities of every kind worthy remark and admiration.'

But in spite of Lord Burleigh's check and of Peacham's advice, it is only of very late years that travelling in England has become at all general; and it may be feared that, even now, many a 'civilised person' would be able to give a far better account of the 'rarities' of France or Italy than of those close at home. Until the present century, indeed, a long journey in England was no such easy matter; and in the sixteenth and seventeenth (especially after the dissolution of the monasteries) it offered, perhaps, more discomforts than one on the Continent, although the 'diversoria' may not have been so full of dangers as those celebrated by Erasmus.

The most ancient notes of a traveller in England which remain to us are those of William Botoner, better known as William of Worcester, who (notwithstanding his name, which

he inherited from his father) was born in Bristol about the year 1415. He was educated at Oxford, mainly at the expense of Sir John Fastolfe, of Caistor, in Norfolk, whose squire he afterwards became, and whose life he wrote. Some specimens of his correspondence with Sir John Fastolfe occur among the Paston Letters. His 'Itinerary' is preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and was printed in 1778. It contains notes on his pilgrimage from Ware, in Hertfordshire, to St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, and of various other journeys in the south of England; descriptions of Bristol and the adjoining country; scraps about the Fastolfes and their castle; and various historical notes, inserted almost at random. The whole is very brief and confused; but, besides the especial interest belonging to any work of a learned layman in the fifteenth century, the 'Itinerary' preserves dimensions and measurements of churches, castles, and other buildings, the value of which has long been recognized by archæologists. It is not easy to discover even a hint of the picturesque in William of Worcester; yet we follow with some curiosity the record of his ten days' ride from Ware to the great Cornish shrine; and those at least who know the country are pleased to learn how 'jantavit'—he breakfasted—among the Canons of Crediton, and then proceeded by rough roads (a day's journey, although little more than fifteen miles—so that we must suppose the Bordeaux of the Canons to have been unusually attractive) to Okehampton, where he found shelter in the stronghold of the Courtenays, the ruined walls of which still hang so picturesquely over the mountain-stream. From Okehampton, Master William journeyed over 'le moore vocat. Dertmoore' to the guest-hall of the Benedictines at Tavistock, where, if the annals of the house speak true, he was sure to find good venison of the red-deer, and no lack of its necessary accompaniments. It is this progress from



college to castle and from castle to monastery which gives such a marked distinction to William's 'Itinerary,' and to that of his successor, Leland. Both travellers show us something of the true old England ; although great changes had taken place between the time of William's journeys, made just before the outbreak of the Wars of the Roses, and those of Leland, when the storm had already broken over the great religious houses.

The 'Itinerary' of Leland, first printed by the laborious Hearne, who 'drove the spiders' from so 'much prose and rhyme,' embraces nearly the whole of England. It is infinitely fuller and more exact than the short notes of William of Worcester, and it calls for especial notice as the first great survey of the island, to which such writers as Harrison, Drayton, and even Camden were confessedly much indebted. John Leland (or Leyland, as the name was spelt by himself) was born in London towards the end of the reign of Henry VII., and, after his first education in St. Paul's School, under the famous Lily, he spent some time at the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Paris—in all of which his reputation for learning was considerable. Henry VIII. made him one of his chaplains, gave him the rectory of Poperinghen in the march of Calais, and appointed him royal librarian and antiquary. It is clear that Leland had embraced the new doctrine at a very early period ; but his zeal for religious reform, which we need not suppose to have been excessive, did not prevent him from feeling deep regret at the 'havoc of manuscripts and all ancient monuments of learning' caused by the dissolution of the monasteries, and by the changes and troubles of the preceding years. The lesser religious houses were dissolved in 1536. Three years before, Leland had received a commission under the Great Seal, entitling him, 'upon very just considerations, . . . to peruse and diligently to search all the libraries of monas-



teries and colleges' throughout the realm. The passing of the Act in 1536 must have shown him that no time was to be lost; and he set forth accordingly in that year on a series of journeys which lasted until 1542 or 1543. When he began his 'Itinerary,' the lesser houses were in course of surrender. Long before he had completed it, the greater monasteries (suppressed in 1539) had also fallen; and thus, in the course of his wanderings, Leland must have witnessed—more completely, perhaps, than any other person of his age—the greatest external change brought about by the Reformation. In his 'Newe Yeare's Gifte to King Henry the VIII.'—a short account of his labours offered to the King in 1546—he says that, after a long study of English historians—

'After that I had perpendid the honest and profitable studies of these Historiographes, I was totally enflammid with a love to see thoroughly al those partes of this your opulente and ample Reaulme, that I had redde of yn the aforesaid writers; ynsomuch that, al my other occupations intermitted, I have so travelid yn yowr Dominions, booth by the Se Costes and the middle partes, sparing nother labor nor costes, by the space of these vi yeres paste, that there ys almost nother Cape nor Bay, Haven, Creke, or Peere, River or Confluence of rivers, Breches, Waschis, Lakes, Meres, Fenny Waters, Montaynes, Valleis, Mores, Hethes, Forestes, Chases, Wooddes, Cities, Burges, Castelles, principale Manor Placis, Monasteries and Colleges, but I have seene them; and notid yn so doing a hole worlde of thinges very memorable.'\*

During his travels, Leland made large collections from the monastic libraries; and he retired to his house in the parish of St. Michael-le-Querne, in order to digest them, and to prepare the books and maps which he promises in his letter to the King. But from whatever cause—(the Romanist Pits, whom Fuller calls the 'idle drone stealing all,' asserts that it arose from his having degenerated from the 'ancient religion')—Leland became insane, and so remained until his death in 1552. Sir John Cheke, under the direction of King Edward

\* *Itinerary*, vol. i., introd., p. xxii.

VI., took possession of his manuscripts, which, after passing through many hands, came at last to the Bodleian, among the treasures of which great library they still remain. Both the 'Itinerary' and the 'Collectanea' (extracts and notes from various MSS.) were edited by Hearne in the early part of the last century.

It is scarcely possible to rate too highly the value of Leland's 'Itinerary.' The notes of which it consists were made no doubt during each journey, and nearly in the shape in which we now have them; and, rough and brief as they are, often breaking off just at the point where we should be glad of some special bit of description, they have about them—at least to the acute perception of an Oldbuck—the great interest which belongs to the first adventure in a novel branch of inquiry. No one before Leland had passed through England, merely for the sake of making himself acquainted with the face of the country, with its antiquities, and with the literary treasures reposing in its monastic libraries. His 'Itinerary' was in every sense a sign of the times, just as Leland himself represents the special antiquarian spirit developed by the Reformation. Such a series of journeys was then, perhaps, only possible in England. No other country, at all events, possesses anything so early or so complete as the 'Itinerary.' The 'Voyages Littéraires' of the French Benedictines belong to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and their researches were greatly limited. But Leland, as he rode sometimes 'by a mile on Fosse,' sometimes 'by woodes on Watling Strete,' by 'brokettes' and 'praty low meddows,' or 'al by champayn, corne, and gresse,' rode as geographer no less than as antiquary, and almost as discoverer in a little known country. Nothing like an accurate map of an English county was then in existence. He describes accordingly, and as minutely as possible, the courses of the rivers, with their fords and bridges, the

positions and aspects of the havens and 'havenets,' the lines of the great roads, and the general face of the country. His admiration is reserved for such rich land as he saw between Exeter and Crediton—'exceeding fair—corn, gresse, and wood.' The dales and mountains of Northern England, or the Cornish rocks and headlands, were as yet biding their time ; and although Leland climbed the 'high terrible cragge' of Tintagel, and seems even to have visited the 'Islettes of Scilly,' his record of them is very brief and unsatisfactory:—

'These high wild hills, and rough uneven ways,  
Draw out our miles, and make them wearisome.'

He describes, indeed, the great 'plenty' of Scilly,—'gresse,' 'good pasture,' corn, and conies ; but he would have written somewhat differently, could he have seen its existing marvels, its thickets of fuchsia and scarlet geranium, its aloes and its palm-trees ; and, above all, its herd of ostriches, which followed in the wake of their late master as he welcomed the stranger to his solitary island.

Between the death of Leland in 1552, and the publication of the first edition of Camden's 'Britannia' in 1586, English topography had made a considerable advance. Carew of Anthony had written his 'Survey of Cornwall,' although it was not printed until the beginning of the next century ; and Lambarde, in 1570, had 'set forth' his 'Perambulation of Kent,' the first complete description of an English county. Both Lambarde and Carew ranked among the friends of Camden : but it was the Flemish geographer Ortelius, author of the first Atlas, or collection of maps (which had hitherto been published singly by their several constructors), who persuaded him to undertake the general description of his country—a work of no small difficulty and labour. The 'Britannia' went through five editions before Camden's death in 1623 ; and the commendations of the learned, both in England and on the Continent, were loud and general. He

was accused, indeed, of having used Leland's Manuscripts without acknowledgement; but whilst in his defence he admits that he had read them, and had cited them when necessary, he asserts that he had himself gone over much of the same ground, and had made his own observations. If Leland, he says, had spent five years in such studies, he had spent thirty. It was to Leland, no doubt, that Harrison was chiefly indebted in compiling the 'Description of Britaine' prefixed to Hollinshed's 'Chronicle.' Both Leland and Camden must have supplied much of the material for Drayton's 'Polyolbion,' the first part of which was written before 1598, though not published before 1613.

The troubles of the seventeenth century interfered not a little with peaceful travellers. Fuller, whose book of 'Worthies' was compiled during the height of the Civil War, and often, as at Basing House, under the very guns of the combatants, was somewhat of an enforced wanderer; and although his descriptions of the several counties are generally as accurate as they are quaint, they are too brief to give us much topographical information; and, indeed, his object was of a different character. In the early part of the next century we again encounter a thorough-paced topographer—if, indeed, we may not fairly regard him as the earliest type of the modern tourist. This is Dr. William Stukeley, a member of an old Lincolnshire family, who, after settling for some time as a physician in his native county, removed to London, and, when upwards of forty, was ordained by Archbishop Wake. His taste for antiquities had been early developed; but it was his gout that made him an antiquarian tourist. This confined him to the house throughout the winter. To shake off its effects and to recover his strength he set out with the spring on his 'Itinera,' the first object of which was 'to trace out the footsteps of Cæsar's expedition on this island.' The results of his wanderings he gave to the world in the

'Itinerarium Curiosum,' and the 'Iter Boreale.' Lord Chancellor King gave him the living of All Saints in Stamford, to which the Duke of Montague added the Rectory of St. George's, Queen Square. Those were not days of ecclesiastical rigour; and Stukeley retired from both livings to Kentish Town, where he wrote his 'Stonehenge' and 'Carausius,' and where a numerous assembly of well-wigged antiquaries gathered round the 'Arch-Druid of his Age,' as he was called, from his proficiency in what was then entitled 'Druidical History.'

To see how Stukeley set forth on his expeditions we have only to turn our eyes on the plates which illustrate his 'Itinerarium.' There we behold the adventurous Doctor, mounted on his long-tailed steed, in all the glories of Ramillies wig and three-cornered hat, daring the ford below Crowland Bridge, inspecting King John's palace at Clarendon, recreating himself with a game at bowls under the shadow of the White Friars at Gloucester, mounting by what seems a sufficiently rough road toward the crest of Wansdyke, journeying along the ridge of the Fosse toward 'Ad Pontem' or 'Margidunum,' or seated on the cliffs of Beer, and sketching what he held to be 'Moridunum,' the Seaton of modern sea-bathers. His various 'Itinera' are addressed to different friends, many of whom were his companions on the road. They were not 'wholly a hunting after fresh air with the vulgar citizens, but an examination into the works of nature and of past ages,' to the first of which classes we must assign his description of the fair sex at Exeter:—

'The people are industrious and courteous; the fair sex are truly so, as well as numerous. Their complexions, and generally their hair likewise, fair. They are genteel, disengag'd, of easy carriage, and good mien.'

Stukeley's peculiar spelling is to be noticed. 'Anything,' he says, 'that assists or amuses travellers is most highly



commendabl ;' and his eccentricities in this way undoubtedly amuse those who travel through his folio. On the whole, the value of his *Itinera* may fairly be admitted. They preserve notices of much that has long since passed from us ; and they led the way for the researches of a tourist of far wider range, Thomas Pennant. 'Sir,' said Johnson, of Pennant, 'he had greater variety of enquiry than almost any man, and has told us more than perhaps one in ten thousand could have done in the time that he took.'

Pennant, who was born in 1726, was a naturalist before he became an antiquary or a topographer. But he made a tour in Cornwall before he was twenty ; and ten years afterwards passed through much of Ireland, where, he tells us, 'such was the conviviality of the country, that my journal proved as *maigre* as my entertainment was *gras*,—so it never was a dish to be offered to the public.' His first published tour was the record of a journey, in 1769, into Scotland, then, in his own words, 'as little known as Kamtschatka.' Pennant's description was received favourably, and read with much eagerness ; and it was partly owing to the interest it had excited that Johnson was induced to undertake his famous tour in 1773. Pennant had already made (1772) a second expedition to Scotland. The results of this were published in 1775 ; and there followed, at intervals, *Tours in Wales*, *Journeys from Chester to London*, along the South Coast, and elsewhere. All were performed on horseback, since the tourist considered 'the absolute resignation of one's person to the luxury of a carriage to forbode a very short interval between that and the vehicle which is to convey us to our last stage.'

Whilst Pennant (1769) was daring all the unknown dangers of the Highlands, the poet Gray (who already, in 1765, four years before Pennant's first visit, had visited Lord Strathmore at Glamis Castle, returning by Killiecrankie and



Blair Athole, and declares that 'since he saw the Alps he had seen nothing sublime till now,') was visiting the English lakes, passing under and wondering at 'that huge creature of God, Ingleborough,' and penetrating the terrific chasm of Gordale. 'I stayed there,' he says, 'not without shuddering, a quarter of an hour, and thought my trouble richly paid, for the impression will last with life.' Something of this sensibility to the grander and ruder scenery of the North is to be found in Pennant; and it is interesting to compare his Scottish tours with the 'Letters' of the Englishman, Burt, who was employed in the Highlands during the construction of the great military road (between 1715 and 1745), and whose only impression of the scenery which surrounded him was one of horror and disgust. Pennant's admiration of mountain and torrent is very different; although it nowhere becomes the 'feeling and the love' that is manifest in the letters of Gray, who is, perhaps, to be regarded as the first of that 'romantic school' of tourists which has only grown into decided prominence during the present century. But even Gray is hardly so much the father of modern tourists as his contemporary and early friend, Horace Walpole. Just as the seeds of Gothic revival lay in Strawberry Hill, and those of *Ivanhoe* and *Kenilworth* in the Castle of Otranto, the germ of the modern tour lies in those adventurous expeditions in search of 'castles, and abbeys, and ruins,' of which the delightful records remain in the letters to Bentley and Montagu. Adventurous they must in truth have been to a traveller of Walpole's fastidiousness. He tells of 'piteous distresses,' bedchambers 'stinking of tobacco like a justice of peace,' 'a sugar-dish of hot water in a pewter plate' brought to make his tea; deep Sussex roads, 'great quenchers of curiosity,' through which he had to labour in the dark; frequent upsets, and occasional encounters with fierce divines and uncourteous stewards. The excursions of Walpole and of Gray

have, like the journeys of Leland, though in a somewhat different manner, the charm of discovery. There were no guide-books to point out the great views, or to catalogue the antiquarian treasures scattered throughout the country. In the remotest village church which Walpole entered he might hope to find some unknown and neglected monument, in itself an illustration of English history, just as in the adjoining hall or manor-house he might discover some Holbein consigned to a garret, or (as at Hurstmonceaux) some St. Catherine in stained glass 'banished to a window in the buttery.' Such possibilities as these have long passed away. There are few English churches whose 'memorials of piety in brass and stone' are not well known and cared for, and few old houses whose ancient treasures have not been sought out and restored to positions of honour—thanks to the love of antiquarian study first made fashionable by Walpole. We can no longer set forth as discoverers; but whilst travelling in England was never so easy, the means of real benefit by such travel were never more completely within the reach of all classes. What then is this real benefit? and what is the heritage into which we may thus enter, if we choose?

There is no corner of England without its interest. To use Fuller's words—though in a somewhat different sense—'Some shires, Joseph-like, have a better-coloured coat than others; and some, with Benjamin, have a more bountiful mess of meat belonging unto them. Yet every county hath a child's portion, as if God in some sort observed gavel-kind in the distribution of His favours.\*' Whatever 'things to be seen and observed' are pointed out by Lord Bacon in his *Essay on Travel*, are to be found in our own country not less noteworthy and not less full of instruction than on the Continent; and to Lord Bacon's list must now be added natural scenery, the love for which, and the search after it, are

\* *Worthies*, chap. ii.

developments of recent date, often, it is true, affected and unreal, yet, on the whole, of so great and general influence, that had there been in King James's days anything like the existing passion for mountain and torrent, the *Essay on Travel* would have contained some pregnant words on the matter. There are, of course, certain classes of scenery—the grander and more sublime—to study which in perfection we must go out of England; but it is probable that many a traveller in search of the picturesque, who allows himself to be hurried through the defiles of the Saxon Switzerland, or to be dragged along the passes of the Tyrol, would obtain as much enjoyment, see as much that would be new to him, and would assuredly find himself on a far less beaten track, if he confined himself to his own country; following leisurely some such route as the line of the Sussex Downs, full of the most romantic nooks and recesses, and rich in all kinds of antiquarian relics; or penetrating day by day the long windings of the Yorkshire dales, wild districts as yet for the most part unconscious of the railway whistle. Before enlarging on this subject, however, it will be well to note what is a greater—if not the greatest—advantage to be derived from English travel—the strong light which may be thrown by it on the events of English history, and the reality which it may be made to give to the words and descriptions of chronicler and historian. ‘Original records’—we quote the words of Dean Stanley, whose own writings are the best possible illustrations of his teaching—

‘are not confined merely to contemporaneous histories, nor even to contemporaneous literature—sermons, poems, laws, decrees. Study the actual statues and portraits of the men, the sculptures and pictures of the events: if they do not give us the precise image of the persons and things themselves, they give us, at least, the image left on those who came nearest to them. Study their monuments, their grave-stones, their epitaphs, on the spots where they lie. Study, if possible, the scenes of the events, their aspect, their architecture, their geography; the tradition which has survived the history, the legend

which has survived the tradition ; the mountain, the stream, the shapeless stone, which has survived even history and tradition and legend.\*

Surely, if the knowledge to be gained by such study—knowledge which in travel flows in so easily and so fast—deserves to rank among the most valuable results of a foreign tour, that which ought to come to us from a well-planned English tour should be all the more valuable in proportion as a knowledge of English history is more important for us than that of any other country.

Unless the eyes are resolutely closed, something must be gained in this way from any tour. But it is well to seek such knowledge specially ; and it is hardly possible to imagine a more efficient or a more pleasant mode of imparting historical instruction to the young than a series of ‘field lectures’—to borrow a term from the geologists—in a suggestive district. Some materials, indeed, may always be found at no great distance from our own doors, and there are of course especial advantages in the study of the county in which the home may be situated. There is hardly one that would not afford a series of illustrations running through the whole course of English history, such as would give wonderful life and interest to the lessons of the school-room. Or let the summer tour extend through such a tract of country as that along the south coast,—from Kent into Hampshire, or further, into Devonshire and Cornwall. In such scenery as is truly characteristic of England—rich, green, and tranquil ; mingled with much that is wilder and bolder, among granite tors and chalk uplands ; and in a coast-line of the most varied beauty—this tract is almost unrivalled ; and there is hardly another in which places and relics directly connected with the great events of English history are so closely packed or so easily accessible. Unlike most parts of the Continent, where the

\* ‘On the Study of Ecclesiastical History,’ Lecture ii.

country between one great town and another has so often been swept clear of ancient relics, and where even the village churches have generally been stripped of interest, it is difficult to move for the shortest distance through either Kent or Sussex without encountering some memorial of bygone days, often more important and more interesting than those within shelter of the town-walls. This wealth of the open country in England results from the absence of causes which have devastated the Continent—long wars and invading armies. Even in the days of Cromwell's troopers few English manor-houses were destroyed, and few ancestral treasures were injured. Time and neglect have here done far more than intentional violence.

Taking, then, such a tract as this, or some portion of it, let us see what lessons it may be made to give, and in what order they should be read. Some of the southern counties are, of course, richer in antiquities of a special period than others. Cornwall, for example, is the land of the cromlech and stone circle, and of all those mysterious relics belonging to a remote, probably pre-historic age. The great camps and earthworks of a later period are best seen in Dorsetshire and on the Hampshire border. Kent, again, is rich in castles and in remains of domestic architecture ; and so with the rest. But, on the whole, Kent and Sussex contain a greater number of antiquities of all periods than the counties farther west, and the attention may well for the present be confined to them. Both counties are pierced by railways in every direction, so that the various places of interest are readily accessible, either in the course of a long tour or by shorter excursions of a day or two.

The history of our own country may almost be said to have begun in Kent. The period, at all events, before Cæsar's landing is enveloped in so much mist and obscurity—mist which had become denser and more dense under the treat-



ment of the elder antiquaries—that it would hardly be safe to dwell long upon it, even in a ‘field lecture.’ Yet we can scarcely believe that a visit to the hill-side above the Medway on which ‘Kits Coity House’ stands, would not give some kind of reality to even that misty period. The vague mystery in which it is enveloped is at least felt more powerfully within sight of that ancient tomb-chamber and of the venerable yews which here and there darken the hill,—relics of the wood which in far-off days spread all over it. The impression thus gained will become yet stronger if we trace the less distinct but quite as interesting remains—all of them sepulchral—which extend over the ground below Kits Coity House, and which are said to have been connected with another large group of cromlechs and circles in the parish of Addington, at least six miles distant. Whatever be their date, they are at least pre-Roman; and the visitor may be sure that he is looking on the tombs of a powerful tribe which held this part of the island at some time—it may have been long ages—before the oars of Cæsar’s galleys flashed in the sunshine as they crossed the strait towards Britain. Here, however, we are without doubt in a land of uncertainty. To many the more positive relics of the Roman period will convey a clearer sense of antiquity, and will enable them to grasp more definitely the distance—the long stretch of centuries—which separates us from those early days. And in these Kent and Sussex are especially rich. Following the line of the ancient Watling Street, the Roman road which led from the sea towards London, and which is bordered here and there by chestnut copses and cherry orchards—Roman importations, both of them—we make our way from Aylesford and Kits Coity House to Richborough, near Sandwich; where, overhanging the sea and the harbour, in which many a tall trireme once rested, the massive walls of Rutupiæ, the Roman fortress that guarded the shore, are still mouldering. The ground within



the walls is strewn with tiles and broken pottery; in the walls themselves the large flat bonding tiles are visible at due intervals; and the whole scene takes us back at once nearly fifteen hundred years, to the days of the great Stilicho, the last of the Romans who put this island into an effectual state of defence, and who, it has been suggested with the greatest probability, may have left his mark on the ruin we here behold. Rome and Roman Britain, the power of Rome and the long sweep of her arm, become wonderful realities after we have once looked on such a relic as this; and the Montanus of Juvenal, the gastronome who could distinguish by their flavour oysters dredged from this Rutupine strait and carried hence to Rome—

‘ . . . . . Circeis nata forent, an  
Lucrinum ad saxum, Rutupinove edita fundo  
Ostrea, callebat primo deprendere morsu ’—\*

starts into far distincter life when we come upon him afterwards in the pages of the great satirist.

Richborough has other and not less interesting associations; for it was here that St. Augustine landed, when, after his first interview with Ethelbert, he obtained leave to advance by the Watling Street to Canterbury. But we are at present in the world of Roman Britain; and if the tourist still desire to remain in it, he may proceed along the Kentish shore (having in sight all the way, across the strait, the old country of the Morini, from which Cæsar set out for Britain, and speculating on the place of his arrival, which, in spite of Mr. Lewin and the Astronomer Royal, most antiquaries are still inclined to fix at Deal) until he reaches Dover, with

\* Sat. iv. 140. A friend who visited Tusculum in 1859, while excavations were in progress at the villa which is commonly called Cicero's, but is said to have been more probably that of Tiberius, saw some oyster-shells turned up, which were unlike those of the Mediterranean, and which in all probability had been brought from our own coast.

its ancient pharos, and Lymne, the 'Portus Lemanis' of the Itineraries, where massive walls and blocks of ruin, only less striking than those of Richborough, mark the site of another of those strong fortresses which, under the disposition of the Counts of the Saxon shore, protected the southern and eastern coasts during the later Roman period, and formed the germ of the Corporation of the Cinque Ports. Or he may advance still farther into Sussex, where, at Pevensey, he will find the Roman walls of Anderida still nearly thirty feet in height, forming the outer court of a mediæval castle. And perhaps most striking of all, and most instructive to the young student, if properly examined and explained, an excursion may be undertaken across the downs to the Roman villa at Bignor. Here the mosaic pavements of the different apartments, with their gladiators and their heads of gods and goddesses, speak plainly enough of the refinement and policy of the old masters of the world, who in this way, as in so many others, introduced the arts of Rome among the remote Britons. The arrangement and ground-plan of a large Roman villa may be well seen here; and although the mosaics are by no means equal either in execution or in richness of material to those of Corinium (Cirencester), or of Woodbourne in Gloucestershire, they are scarcely less impressive, and are quite as powerful in rolling back for us the stream of time. It may be true, as Horace Walpole complained long ago, that such Roman remains as exist in our island, and are from time to time brought to light, are poor and of small value, compared with those found in Italy itself. But each one of them tells its own story; each does its part towards illustrating the history of the great Empire; and we are sure that a visit to some Roman town or villa—(besides those of Kent and Sussex, especial mention may be made of such sites as Uriconium (Wroxeter) in Shropshire, or Isurium (Aldborough) in Yorkshire, rich in antiquities of

all kinds, and still showing traces of Roman chariot-wheels on their venerable pavements)—whose relics are overshadowed by English oaks and beeches, will often leave a far stronger impression than even a day spent among the ruins of Pompeii or in the wealthiest museum of Italy. Roman relics in England belong to our own history.

It is not necessary in this place to break a lance in defence of the Saxon Chronicle and of the historical arrival of Hengist and Horsa on the coast of Thanet in the middle of the fifth century. The whole question may safely be left in the hands of Mr. Freeman and of Dr. Guest, who, in his *Essay on the 'Early English Settlements in South Britain,'*\* has at least shown that it is not to be decided in so summary a fashion as has of late years been usual. But with whatever feelings we may look on Pegwell Bay, where the landing is said to have taken place, we find ourselves surrounded by relics of our Saxon ancestors, about which there can be no uncertainty, when we climb the hill of Osengall, which rises above it. The whole of this hill is honeycombed with the graves of the first Teutonic (Jutish?) settlers in Thanet. It had been, to all appearance, a Roman cemetery before the Saxons arrived; and graves in which the interment had been made in a decidedly Roman manner have been found here side by side with others in which the Saxons, still heathens, had been buried with their arms and personal ornaments. The relics which have been discovered at Osengall are widely dispersed; but the hill itself will repay a visit, and would be one of the best possible sites for a field lecture which should embrace the whole story of the arrival of the Saxons and their subsequent conversion to Christianity. Below it extends the bay, to which (whatever reality we may assign to Hengist) many a 'ciule' must have stretched across from the shores of Friesland, bearing the chief and his followers, who were to find

\* Printed in the Salisbury volume of the Archæological Institute.

here a new home and a last resting-place. On the hill itself are their graves. Below are Ebbsfleet, now a farm in the marshes, but then a narrow promontory between the bay and the Stour, where St. Augustine and the Christian missionaries first landed; and Richborough, with other memorials of them. The high ground inland is the scene of the famous meeting of Ethelbert and of Augustine; and far in the distance rise the towers of Canterbury Cathedral. The entire history, with its results, is here suggested to us; and if, while still fresh from the hills of Thanet, the tourist should proceed to the little church of St. Martin at Canterbury—granted by Ethelbert to Augustine, and in which the English King was baptized—the story of the conversion would assume such life and reality as not even the study of Dean Stanley's Essay would otherwise give to it.

Saxon memorials of various kinds are, of course, scattered throughout Kent and Sussex, and our heathen ancestors have left traces of their religion on many a green mound and many a bit of lingering forest. All are worth, and all will repay, examination. But we must hasten onward, and again leaving Kent, fix ourselves on the Sussex shore, where we may study at leisure the memorials of the great battle which transferred England to the rule of the Normans. Hastings and Pevensey should both be visited; for the disembarkation of the Conqueror's fleet (600 vessels) no doubt extended along the whole coast between them, and it was at Pevensey that William himself came ashore. But the central point of interest is, of course, the great abbey, a careful examination of the country about which will readily explain the whole course of the battle. The ridge marking the line of the

\* At Sarre, in this neighbourhood, some very interesting excavations have been made; and the objects discovered have been partly deposited in the British Museum, and partly in that of the Kentish Archæological Association at Maidstone. See a paper with illustrations, by Mr. Brent, F.S.A., in the *Archæologica Cantiana*, vol. v.

Conqueror's advance from Hastings ; Hethebrand, the place where he and his knights armed, where his standard was raised, and where he vowed to build on the field, if he should be victorious, an abbey, in which prayer should always be made for the souls of the slain ; Senlac, the ground over which the battle chiefly raged, now for the most part covered by the village of Battle ; the Malfosse, or morass, in which so many English and Normans perished ; and the little rivulet Asten—

' . . . . once distained with native English blood,  
Whose soil yet, when but wet with any little rain,  
Doth blush, as put in mind of those there sadly slain,'\*

may all be made out from the raised terrace in front of the abbey, whence, in the distance, Beachy, the English headland which first greeted the Conqueror as he neared the coast, is also visible. And, turning to the abbey itself, we know that the eastern apse of the church, at or close to which was the place of the high altar, was the spot where the English standard was raised, and where Harold himself fell. On that altar William offered the sword he had carried in the battle and the robe worn at his coronation. All the minute details of the battle, which the chroniclers have preserved, have been illustrated and explained with a most thorough knowledge of all the localities by Mr. Lower ; † and it is with a singular feeling of interest that we find ourselves, with his help, tracing on the spot, with hardly less certainty and minuteness than

\* Drayton, *Polyolbion*.

† Mr. Lower's paper will be found in his *Contributions to Literature* (1854). He is also the translator of the *Chronicle of Battle Abbey*, from 1066 to 1176. (Since this Essay was written, Mr. Freeman's *History of the Norman Conquest* has appeared, the third volume of which contains descriptions of the landing of William, and of the battle of Senlac, which, it need hardly be said, are by far the most minute, life-like, and accurate of any that exist.)



we should be able to bring to the battle-fields of Vittoria or Talavera, the events of the most momentous struggle which the soil of England has ever witnessed. Even if no more substantial memorials of the Conqueror's abbey remained than the 'few foundation-stones in the midst of a swamp'—by which, as Dr. Lappenberg, with strange error, asserts 'we are alone able to determine the spot where it once reared its towers and pinnacles'\*—the main features of the country, still unchanged, would be sufficiently attractive; but much of the existing building recalls the splendour and state in which the 'token and pledge of the royal crown,' as the abbey was called by its monks, continued until the dissolution; and the Conqueror himself becomes considerably less of a shadow as we stand on the scene of his victory and within the walls that commemorated it. There are few spots in England more interesting.

Relics which more or less directly illustrate the history of our country become so numerous, and are so thickly strewn throughout Kent and Sussex, after passing the period of the Conquest, that we are fairly puzzled by an 'embarras des richesses.' But to follow up with the greatest advantage the historical tour which has been proposed, the student should next be led to Canterbury Cathedral, thronged with remembrances of almost every reign in English history. 'There is no church, no place in the kingdom,' says Dean Stanley, 'with the exception of Westminster Abbey, that is so closely connected with the history of our country.' But the architecture of the Cathedral—of various dates and of strongly marked character—is itself an historical monument, or rather a series of monuments. Its architectural history has been traced by Professor Willis, in his admirable work on the subject, through all the successive stages of the building.

\* *England under the Anglo-Saxon Kings*, vol. ii. p. 302 (English translation).



The remarkable Transition work of the choir takes us back to the latter years of the twelfth century, the years (1174-1184) which immediately followed the murder (1170) and the subsequent burning of the 'glorious choir of Conrad.' It is all later than Becket's own time,\* yet there is not a stone which does not in some way speak of him. No doubt the cost of the new choir was mainly defrayed by offerings which poured in at the tomb of the new saint; and it was these very piers and arches that looked down on the solemn procession—such, we are told, as had never been seen in England before—which, led by the young King Henry III., and by Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of the great Charter, conveyed (1220) the relics of Becket from their resting-place in the crypt to the shrine which had been prepared for them behind the high altar. Thus the existing choir of Canterbury Cathedral rose with, and witnessed the beginning of, the veneration for the saint whose shrine made Canterbury one of the great places of European pilgrimage. The superb Perpendicular nave (1380-1411) bears testimony to its culmination. Within little more than a century after this had been completed, the shrine itself disappeared; but although the place on which it stood is now marked only by a slight furrow in the pavement, and by some fragments of a once rich mosaic, the visitor will do well to follow its history as it has been traced for him by Dr. Stanley, observing carefully such traces of the 'Martyr of Canterbury' as still linger in stained glass or in carved stone, and resting well assured that the slightest of these relics will assist him (and he must, after all, do this work mainly for himself) in reconstructing a true picture of the past. Of other and more prominent memorials preserved in the Cathedral little need here be said.

\* Of course, when we say the choir is later, we do not forget how very much there is in Canterbury Cathedral that is older than the days of Becket.

It is impossible to look on the tomb of the Black Prince, with his own helmet and gauntlets still hanging above it,

‘That helm which never stooped, except to time,’

without passing back, for a few moments at least, to the great days of Cressy and Poitiers ; and there are few of the archbishops buried here—Stephen Langton, Chichele, Courtenay, Warham, Pole—whose monuments will not at once recall the events of English history with which they were connected. These tell their own story, and the series is sufficiently complete to enable us to pass almost from the days of the Conquest to those of the Reformation. Dr. Hook’s volumes will be read with tenfold interest after our eyes have rested on these, the most definite existing memorials of the Archbishops, when they were indeed ‘*alterius orbis papæ*.’

The connexion of Rochester—the first outpost advanced by St. Augustine—with Canterbury deserves to be carefully marked, and the Cathedral itself should be compared with its mother-church. The work of the Norman period in Rochester Cathedral is very interesting and suggestive ; but it is especially desirable to point out here the great value of the Norman keep, towering above and overlooking the Cathedral, as one of the best illustrations of that age remaining in England. The various arrangements—the outworks and defences—of an ancient castle may, no doubt, be better studied at Dover, and by all means with M. Violet-le-Duc’s book—excellently translated by Mr. Macdermott\*—in hand. But even the keep of Dover, so grand and strong that, according to tradition, it was the work of evil spirits, yields, in the degree of impression it produces, to the keep of Rochester. Dover, still a fortress, with its ancient chambers still in use,

\* *Essay on the Military Architecture of the Middle Ages*, translated by Mr. Macdermott ; with the original French engravings. Oxford and London, 1860.

has (as is now the case with the magnificent keep of Richmond in Yorkshire) too much of modern warfare about it to carry us back completely and at once to the days of the Norman monarchs. Rochester, on the other hand, shattered and roofless, with the light from the open sky streaming across the great pillars of its hall, has nothing of the present to interpose between ourselves and the twelfth century. The position of the Castle with reference to the walls and defences of the city, and with regard to the Cathedral below it—to which it more than once, and especially during the Barons' wars of the thirteenth century, proved a troublesome neighbour—is well seen from the highest story, which still rises to the height of 100 feet. With the help of such a book as that of M. Violet-le-Duc, a most interesting lesson in mediæval defence and engineering might be read from this point ; and a comparison with the castles of Canterbury and of Dover would render it still more valuable. Leeds, too, which was the great central stronghold of Kent, and is partly Norman, is still to be seen rising grandly in the midst of its lake, a true feudal castle. It retains much of its ancient arrangements, and will assist in rendering complete the series of military illustrations. Pevensey, in Sussex—the 'Castle of the Eagle Honour,' as it was called—brings us to the first years of the fourteenth century ; and, besides its architectural importance, has a special interest as the place from which the earliest existing letter in English was despatched by Lady Pelham to her 'trew lorde.'\* Bodiam, with striking arrangements for defence, is a fine example of the end of the same century, when it was built by Sir Edward Dalyngrudge, one of those successful adventurers whom the French wars had called forth, and who were then raising their stately castles in different parts of England. Hurstmonceaux, again, entirely of brick—the largest post-Roman building of that material

\* See it in Hallam, *Lit. Hist.*, i. 71.

in the country—dates from the reign of Henry VI., and shows us the half-fortress, half-mansion, of the later days of feudalism.

Turning from military to domestic architecture—in examples of which Kent and Sussex are very rich—we shall find that the character of each successive period is not less distinctly marked on the manor-house or the hall than on the castle. At Sore Place, not far from Plaxtole, is a small manor-house, quite perfect, which must have been built about the year 1300, during the reign of the first Edward. The insecurity of times in which a solitary manor-house was always liable to plunder from bands of outlawed men, or even from soldiers who passed it to join the King's military gatherings, is marked by the narrow loops which alone light the ground story; and the slender accommodation—the poor life of even the higher classes—is strongly brought before us in the few and narrow rooms above. The Moat House at Ightham—a veritable manor of romance, such as we read of in the 'gestes' of Sir Lancelot or Sir Percival—carries us onward through the days of Edward III., when its great hall was built, to those of Henry VII. and Henry VIII.; and witnesses, in its changes and alterations, to the gradual change of life and manners. And then—leaving unnoticed many an ancient roof-tree and many a quiet old hall, telling its own story of past ages among its own woods and meadows—we come to those later mansions, belonging, in their present state, at all events, to an age which had no longer special need of barbicans or dungeon-towers—Knole, for example, and Penshurst. They contain, of course, portions of far earlier date; but as we now see them, they rank among the best illustrations of the great Tudor mansion. And what recollections of the profoundest interest are connected with each of these places! Of Penshurst, especially, it may be said, that if, as the famous words

of Johnson suggest, it should be impossible to tread the soil of Marathon without renewing our patriotism, or of Iona without an increase of veneration for ancient piety, all that makes up the best and most thorough English character ought to gain fresh life and strength from a visit to the home of Sir Philip Sydney. Here we may return, more completely than anywhere else, to the great days of his short life. Sir Philip himself, with his own 'keen look,' his parents, his uncles, his brother, and his sister

'. . . . . the subject of all verse,  
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother,'

regard us from the walls of the venerable apartments, some of which are lined with the furniture which Queen Elizabeth herself sent as presents to her cousins of Penshurst. As we wander from room to room, and recall the associations—the chapters from our own history—which are suggested by each one of these portraits, we begin almost to feel with the old monk, that they are in truth the realities, and we who gaze on them the shadows.

Thus, at the risk of dwelling on what must be familiar to many, some of the most prominent historical relics of Kent and Sussex have been indicated, because it is well to show how much may be found in this way within the limits of even a single county, without at all drawing for illustration on those lesser remains which every old church and every old manor-house would surely furnish. But there is no fragment of antiquity—no hint or trace of former days—which may not be made to tell its own story, and in its own degree to aid us in restoring the past. The slight ridge, now in the midst of ploughed fields and enclosures, but marking where an ancient road once passed, will sometimes enable us to explain, with a clearness otherwise unattainable, events—such as the march of troops or the choice of battle-fields—which its course must have influenced. The half-destroyed



dyke, in the hands of such an investigator as Dr. Guest, becomes an important witness in the question of the early settlements of our English ancestors. There is no corner of England which does not contain some relic of former days; and whilst the lessons to be gained from those close at home are to be first read, and may be studied at leisure, they will surely lead, if there be anything of the true historical spirit in the student, to wider surveys and to more extended wanderings. And if anything would tend to awaken that spirit in the youthful mind, it would be such a tour as we have been suggesting, under competent guidance. Every man is not destined to become an historian, or to obtain a relish for historical study. But if the true feeling is latent in the mind, it might be roused to consciousness, and that at a very early age, by a visit to the Roman walls at Richborough, or to the field of the Conquest at Battle.

Still keeping in view such great historical monuments as we are in the habit of seeking in foreign countries with the greatest zeal and eagerness, it is the fact that we have at home more than one such memorial altogether unrivalled in its kind, and which of itself might well be made the object of an English tour. Nowhere else in Europe—perhaps in no other of their ancient provinces—is the limit of the Roman Empire so remarkably traced as by the remains of the great wall which extended, and may still be followed, from Wallsend on the Tyne to Bowness on the Solway—a distance of about sixty-nine miles. The wall and its stations have been excellently described by Dr. Bruce of Newcastle; and, since the appearance of his volume, they have been carefully mapped and surveyed by Mr. Maclauchlan, at the expense of the Duke of Northumberland.\* A more delightful pilgrimage

\* Mr. Maclauchlan's survey was printed 'for private circulation' only. See also an article on the Roman Wall in the *Quarterly Review* for January, 1860.



can hardly be imagined than that along the whole line of the wall, from which short diversions might occasionally be made to the most interesting castles, 'peels,' and 'craggs' which lie at no great distance from it. The railway from Newcastle to Carlisle runs somewhat south of the wall; and one or two of the most remarkable ancient stations may be visited from the 'stations' of the line which has replaced the military way of the legions. But the true way to enjoy such an expedition is to make it either on foot or on horseback, lingering here and there as choice or weather may induce. The wild country through which the wall passes, with its memories of moss-troopers and border-combats—'Ridleys, and Thirlwalls, and a'—is of itself sufficiently exciting; and the sharp, clear air of the hills bracing and appetizing to the utmost. In most parts, indeed, the scene has been little changed since the Tungrian Cohort garrisoned Borcovicus, or the Asturians were quartered at Æsica; and we look over the same rough fells of crag and heather which were seen by them as they paced the summit of the rampart. Such it is especially at Sewing Shields, where the basaltic rocks 'descend in abrupt and lofty cliffs to the northern moorlands;' and where, says tradition, King Arthur and his knights are lying in an enchanted sleep within a mysterious cavern. Beyond this are passes in the wall, 'Cat Gate' and 'Busy Gap,' where the moss-troopers used to cross the barrier. 'The place,' says Camden, 'was infamous for thieving and robbery, where stood some castles (chesters, they called them), as I have heard, but could not with safety take the full survey of it, for the robbers hereabouts.' We may now survey it with safety; although the 'robbers'—or at least one famous house of them—will be brought to mind a little further on, where is 'Hot Bank Farm, still inhabited by members of the ancient family of Armstrong, who live here with a character very different to that which they acquired in the moss-trooping days. The

funeral of the late Mr. Armstrong was followed across the moorland by two hundred mounted borderers.'\*

Of the same wild and unchanged character is the country about Housesteads—the ancient Borcovicus—the most interesting station on the wall, honoured by Stukeley with the name of the British 'Tadmor in the Wilderness.' The station itself covers about five acres, and occupies a lofty ridge with a wide view stretching away on three sides of it. On the north is the wall; the west gate retains its strong central gate-post of stone; and on either side are the ruined roofless guard-chambers. Narrow streets, with the marks of wheels on their pavements, intersect the station; and without the walls great heaps of oyster-shells and of bones, chiefly red-deer and wild-boar, testify to the long occupation of the Tungrian Cohort, which was placed here for more than a century. That these Northern stations were not without the most stately appliances of Roman magnificence is proved by the superb silver 'lanx' or dish, weighing 150 ounces, which was found in 1734 at Corstopitum (near the junction of the Cor with the Tyne), and is now at Alnwick. Borcovicus, however, in its flourishing days, never witnessed more satisfactory feasting than took place within its walls in 1852, when the Antiquaries of the Institute, in their progress along the Roman wall, were entertained here by the Duke of Northumberland. It is amusing to compare the comfort and luxury with which modern archæologists traverse the length and breadth of the island, and find tables spread for them in the wilderness, with the trials and troubles of such men as Leland or Stukeley.

Beyond Housesteads, the wall 'is seen in its full perfection and grandeur, running from hill to hill, and cresting the crags, which on the right rise perpendicularly from the moorland. On the left is a magnificent view over the

\* *Handbook for Durham and Northumberland*, p. 277.

valley of the Tyne and the Cumberland hills, among which Skiddaw and Saddleback are conspicuous. On the right are the dark-blue Northumbrian lakes or loughs, sleeping in the hollow of the moorland.\*

There are four of these small lakes, all picturesque. But to enumerate half the points of interest which crowd upon us as we follow the course of the wall would be impossible. It must be remembered that along its whole line remains of the wall itself, of the vallum south of it, of the larger stations, at intervals of four miles, and of the 'Castella' placed at the distance of one Roman mile from each other, are constantly offering themselves for remark and examination. Is there not here sufficient inducement to lead many a band of pedestrians to set out, staff in hand, whilst the heather is bright over all the hills of the Border, and to cross the island under the guidance of this great relic?

Scarcely less distinctive than the Roman wall are the remains of the Cistercian Abbeys which give so deep an interest to the picturesque valleys of Yorkshire. Citeaux, the parent monastery, has nothing to show us but desecrated buildings, of an almost modern character. At Clugny, its great rival, the towers of the church alone remain. At Clairvaux, the Abbey of St. Bernard, what remains of the monastery has been converted into a prison, and the church has been completely destroyed. There is little at either place to recal the great days of the twelfth century—St. Bernard or St. Hugh. But the pilgrim who, after gazing, not without a feeling of almost awe-stricken sadness, upon that wonderful view of Rievaulx from the hill-side, descends among her ruined aisles and cloisters; or, yet more strongly, who lets the long summer-day glide by him among the grassy courts and solemn shadows of Fountains, is brought almost face to face with St. Bernard and the band of monastic reformers

\* *Handbook*, p. 277.

who first gathered around him. The simple unadorned architecture of the great church, which wants little more than its roof to become again perfect, reminds us at once of the protest made by St. Bernard against the rich and fantastic sculptures with which 'they of Cluny' delighted to fill their buildings. Much of it was, no doubt, the work of the second abbot, Murdac, afterwards Archbishop of York, who had been one of Bernard's own monks at Clairvaux, and to whom, when in England and at Fountains, Bernard often wrote, drawing many thoughts and images from the name 'Fontes,' Fountains, which had been given to the new monastery. All the arrangements—all the daily life—of a great religious house, as it was in its prime and perfection, may here be minutely traced; and it is difficult for the coldest imagination to remain unmoved, as, portion by portion, the old world of Fountains reveals itself. No such remains—so perfect and so entirely of the earliest Cistercian period—exist elsewhere in Europe: and to all this must be added the exquisite and touching beauty of the situation and the surrounding scenery. Some of the great yew-trees which sheltered the monks who first fled to this solitary valley from the house of St. Mary's, at York, still remain, and still bear their scarlet berries; and beyond the church rise the shelves of rock, overhung with fern and ivy, which echoed their first litanies. 'Where could a place'—to quote a passage which truly reproduces the spirit of the scene,—

'Where could a place be found more fit to convince the recluse, if it were only by the force of contrast, that the retirement which he enjoyed was superior to the charms of the world beyond him? Where could he live more purely, more devotedly, to God? The great book of Nature was daily open to the Cistercian then, and he would see in it what to other readers was meaningless and vain. The heavens looked down upon him with their many eyes, piercing him through and through, and telling him that everything was visible to their viewless Lord. Strange voices seemed to commune with him from between the wings of the wind as it arose and fell in that solitary

vale. In everything around him, pure and simple as it was, there was something to direct him heavenwards, a type or symbol of some better thing to come.

"Sum nemorum studiosus, ait,"—

"There was a spirit in the woods," through which he walked, and he would think of the green-tree and the dry. The murmurings in the elm, the twinkling leaves of the beech which St. Bernard loved to watch, the wanton airs which ran in and out like sportive children among the branches of the oak, were as significant to him as the prophetic breeze which stirred of old "the tops of the mulberry-trees." In those rocks, once a shelter to him when he came for the first time into that "weary land," he would see a type of that great "spiritual rock" on which the Church was built, and he would beseech Him who had "poured down the stones into the valley" to be to him a "house of defence" and a "rock of habitation." The waters which bubbled up and sparkled among the clefts would remind him of the "pure fountain of life and the crystal sea;" and when he mused upon the perfections of Him who had sent these "springs into the valleys," he would join in the exclamation of the Psalmist, "All my fresh springs shall be in Thee. Benedicite, Fontes, Domino."\*\*

Besides Fountains and Rievaulx, Yorkshire, it need hardly be said, is especially rich in monastic ruins, the greater part of which are Cistercian. Byland, Kirkstall, Jervaulx, and Bolton, are all rich in interest and association, and all (including Bolton, although that was a house of Augustinian Canons) situated in such picturesque valleys—

'Silvestribus undique cinctas  
Arboribus—'

as the Cistercians loved: valleys once wild and 'desert,' but now full of that mournful grace which nothing but the ruins of such houses can possibly bestow. A month among the abbeys of Yorkshire would be full of instruction for the archæologist and historian, and full of delight for the artist. But if the ruins are to tell their true story, they must be visited in a thoughtful and reverent spirit; not, 'with the vulgar citizens,' for the sake of a holiday only.

A long catalogue might thus be compiled—much longer

\* Raine's *Lives of the Archbishops of York*, vol. i. p. 215.



than would generally be thought possible—of similar ‘specialties,’ in which the best, and sometimes the sole, examples are possessed by our own country. Such, among many others, are those village churches which have before been mentioned. Neither France, Belgium, nor Germany, outside the walls of their great towns, can show anything like the treasures of architectural and antiquarian interest which the traveller is sure to find here, whenever he leaves the main route, and penetrates the pleasant byways of England. Often, indeed, on our course from one town to another the railway hurries us by stations which would land us within an easy walk of some ancient church, far more picturesque in its quiet beauty, and far more interesting to the archæologist, than the better known ‘lion’ of the district, which is perhaps the main object of our journey. Tourists on the Continent are too much in the habit of neglecting all that lies between one great station and another; but architectural tourists in England, at all events, may be assured that they would find an occasional deviation from the main line of their journey as pleasant as it would be profitable. Such churches as Haccombe, in Devonshire, rich in ancient monuments and brasses, or as Tanfield, in Yorkshire, where, in spite of modern restoration, the solemn effigies of the Marmions, in their low-roofed chapel, remain nearly as they were seen by Leland, and remind us of one of Cattermole’s most romantic drawings, are well worth the delay of a few hours and the labour of reaching them. The superb churches of the Norfolk Marshland, again, out of the way as they are, deserve a tour in their especial honour; or let the wanderer find his way across the heaths from Pickering to the little Yorkshire church of Lastingham, the whole scene about which remains nearly as it was when St. Cedd established his monastery there, and Bede came to it southward from Jarrow to obtain materials for his history. The Norman crypt, it is true,



is of later date ; but its 'antique pillars, massy proof,' are solemn enough to take us far back toward that early time.

The Cathedral Churches of England must hardly be included in the list of specialties. Yet in them we find of course much that is peculiar to this country, and that illustrates its history in the most striking and impressive manner. Beginning with Canterbury and Rochester, we may follow the progress of Christianity in our island, tracing it from Winchester to Wells and Exeter ; then to the South Saxons at Chichester ; then eastward and northward to Norwich, Ely, and Lincoln ; from York over the whole of Northumbria ; and from Lichfield over Mercia. In each one of the great cathedrals that occupy these ancient sites we may read the history of long centuries—centuries of change in architecture, in art, in manners, in religion. The tourist, who should proceed from one cathedral to another, taking them in due historical order, and allowing himself time for a proper study of all they contain, would find, at the end of his most pleasant labours, that he had amassed a greater amount of information, and had gained more direct illustrations of English history, civil and ecclesiastical, than he could have done in any other course of travel, or by any amount of unassisted book-study.

One other subject may here be touched upon—the art-treasures of England contained in private collections, and scattered broadcast over the whole country. It is a fact, that to see the finest works of certain great artists—and especially of two or three of the Netherlanders—the foreigner must come to England. Rembrandt is 'more abundant everywhere than in his own land'—most abundant, and probably finest, in England. It is the same with Teniers, Cuyp, Hobbema, and Ruysdael ; and even Claude and Gaspar Poussin are, in all probability, better represented

here than on the Continent.\* And these treasures are not, as for the most part is the case in other countries, shut up in great town mansions or 'palazze,' but are to be found in almost every large country-house. Such, indeed, is the wealth of England, and such its diffusion, that it is impossible to say that the simplest villa or parsonage which the tourist passes may not contain some picture of the highest value and interest. Of no other country can the same be said; and perhaps in no other country could there be the same liberality that prevails here, for the most part, in permitting the free access of strangers to the greater and more important collections. Petworth, Cobham, and Castle Howard are grand examples. Here and there, of course, a portal will be found before which the most adventurous knight-errant will sound his horn in vain; but in arranging a tour through any part of England, the collections great and small which lie in the course of it may generally be relied on as accessible, and should often be made, with advantage, the chief objects of the journey.

If the railways which cover the face of England have destroyed much of that old secluded life which was not without its great charms, they have opened for us points of interest in every direction. But in truth many secluded districts still remain, sufficiently remote from the scream of the engine to preserve their old characteristics to a great extent. These are the pleasantest haunts of the pedestrian. No line of railway has as yet penetrated into the recesses of Dartmoor; although the outlying bastions of that great hill fortress

'Hear afar  
The rattling of th' *un-scythed* car.'

Among the granite tors, and beside the clear mountain

\* See an article on the 'Treasures of Art in Great Britain,' *Quart. Rev.*, March, 1854.

streams, the artist with his pencil or the angler with his rod may wander day after day, in blissful ignorance of all the turmoil of nations or of cabinets. He may listen, when he does light upon some lonely farm among its wind-swept ash trees, to old-fashioned Devonshire stories, told in that true Doric which is daily becoming less and less true in the more open country; and, as he climbs the steep hill-side among the bent grass and the heather, he may trace out the ancient remains which abound over all the forest—the stone circle—the hut—or the *kistvaën*, the ‘narrow house of death.’ It is like passing back into another century to find oneself in such an unchanged district as this,—more unchanged, perhaps, and more truly of an older world, than the wild country of North Devon, although much of that is also beyond the sweep of the railway. Portions of the Cornish coast, again, especially that on the north,

‘All down the thundering shores of Bude and Boss,’

from Morwenstow, with its venerable church, to the famous Tintagel—a sunset seen from which will be one of the events of an artist’s life—and farther west, to St. Columb, are hardly less old-fashioned and unconscious of modern influence. The pedestrian indeed may well be advised to make the circuit of the coast, passing down it on the north, and returning to Plymouth on the south. But the greater part of Cornwall is now readily accessible by railway; and the general tour of this county is one of those which are most certain to reward either the archæologist or the wanderer who is only in search of the picturesque. Corners of Northumberland, of Durham, of the lake country, of Derbyshire, and least generally known, perhaps, of all, of Yorkshire, will supply excellent ground for the wanderer who desires to escape for a time from the cares and the associations of this nineteenth century. The western dales of Yorkshire, the

wild district of Craven, and all that mass of rugged hills and moors that stretches northward from Ingleborough to the borders of Westmoreland and Durham, are little trod by pedestrians, and retain much of their primitive character. They abound with scenes of extreme beauty and grandeur; Gordale chasm, indeed, about nine miles from Settle, is probably unrivalled in England (and even in the Scottish Highlands we should not easily find a scene that would surpass it) in its almost terrific sublimity. It is in wanderings through such tracts as these that we learn thoroughly to appreciate the beauty and the variety of English scenery; and to recognise, more or less distinctly in proportion to the study that we bestow on it, the wonderful power with which its numerous phases have been rendered by Turner, and by many another English painter of landscape. The following, from its source to the sea, of such a river as the Yorkshire Wharfe, as the Severn, the Dart, or the Thames (the last, perhaps, the most completely English in the character of its scenery) would bring far greater pleasure to many a tourist than the usual steam voyage up the Rhine, and would leave him wondering at the unsuspected beauties of his native country.

Many a delightful tour, on foot, on horseback, or sometimes using the railway, as chance and opportunity serve, might be arranged by making its object some definite point of examination—antiquarian, historical, or even geographical. The battle-fields of the Wars of the Roses, Towton and Wakefield, Barnet and St. Alban's, and Bosworth, with its many memories, might be made to illustrate all that troubled and very obscure period; or we might follow in the track of Simon de Montfort and the Barons' war of the thirteenth century—visiting Lewes, with its 'Mount Harry,' the scene of the battle, its Castle and its Priory—and Evesham, where the great Earl fell, and where his tomb in the Abbey Church

became one of the shrines of English pilgrimage. We might, too, like the illustrious Dr. Heavystern, when he rode northward from York to visit Mr. Oldbuck at Monkbarns, insist on ignoring all turnpike-roads, railways, and other modern appliances, and betake ourselves to the course of Watling Street, or of the Icknield Way, the true old 'King's Highways,' whose stones were laid by the Roman legions, and whose 'peace' is proclaimed in the laws of Saxon monarchs. Let us listen for a moment to Dr. Guest's comment on the charms of the Icknield—the road which crossed the island from Norfolk toward Devonshire :—

'I know,' he says, 'no part of England—and I am well acquainted with its bye-ways—where so much of genuine legend still lingers among the peasantry as along the course of the Icknield Street. Plott represents the road as almost deserted in his day; yet your guide will talk of the long lines of pack-horses that once frequented the 'Ickley Way,' as if they were things of yesterday: and a farmer in the Vale of Aylesbury told me, as he was pointing out the course of the Icknield Street along the sides of the Chiltern, that in the Popish times they used to go on pilgrimage along it from Oxford to Cambridge. . . . There is something in the deserted aspect of this old trackway which is very fascinating to the antiquary: while the boundless views which, throughout its whole course, open to the west and north, and its long stretches of springy turf-land, which even the agricultural changes of the last ten years have not wholly obliterated, are accompaniments that will no doubt be more generally appreciated. The absence of ancient towns along its course has been often noticed. . . . But the want of Roman remains is amply compensated for by the many objects, mostly of British antiquity, which crowd upon us as we journey westward; by the tumuli and the camps which show themselves on our right hand and on our left; by the six gigantic earthworks which, in the interval of eighty miles, between the borders of Suffolk and the Thames, were raised at widely distant periods to bar progress along this now deserted thoroughfare; by the White Cross which rises over the Vale of Aylesbury, and the still more ancient White Horse that looks down upon the Vale of Wantage. When it is remembered that in its probable course westward the Icknield Street passes by 'Wayland's Smithy,' and the mysterious Avebury, and that it crosses the Wansdyke in its progress toward Stonehenge and old Sarum, it will be conceded that no line of country of the same extent in Britain can show objects of greater interest to



the antiquary, and—why may we not add the more dignified name ?—to the historian.\*

If the tourist do not return from such an expedition '*religiosior* or '*doctior*, with more piety or learning ; it is surely his own fault if he do not depart '*jucundior*, with more pleasure and lawful delight.†

What is the best and pleasantest season for travelling in England ? Most of us begin to move when the late summer is passing into autumn, and when the foliage, if it has not begun to change, has at least assumed that tint of deeper green which precedes the richer hues of the 'fall.' But this was not our ancestors' fashion. Chaucer's pilgrims set out—

' Whaune that April with his shoures sote  
The droughte of March had perced to the rote,  
\* \* \* \* \*

When Zephirus eke with his sote brethe  
Enspired had in every holt and hethe  
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne  
Had in the Ram his halfe cours yronne.'

Those who make their pilgrimage at this most delightful time of the year will surely meet their reward. Grey cathedral and ruined monastery are never more impressive or more touching than when their lichen-stained walls are contrasted by the fresh tender green of young leaves ; and, although the grandeur of mountain scenery is almost independent of the seasons, it is in the spring and early summer that the most exquisite effects follow the changes of light among the scarred hill-sides and through the deep river valleys. There is a certain stir of the blood, too, at this season, which naturally inclines us to motion. 'Then longen

\* 'The Four Roman Ways,' *Archæological Journal*, June, 1857. It may be added that Dr. Guest's very interesting paper is illustrated by a map, which (as well as the paper itself) will assist the tourist, who may gird himself up for the adventure of the Icknield.

† Fuller, *Worthies*. Introduction.



folk to go on pilgrimages.' We sympathise with the brisk spring wind, driving its flocks of white cloudlets along the sky; and with the dashing hill-stream, that seems to call with especial joyousness through the young green of its birches and rowan trees. But, after all, few of us can choose our own time for holiday; and, however we may prefer the spring, we know well how many charms follow in the train of—

'Autumn bold,  
With universal tint of sober gold.'\*

No season, indeed, is without its delight. Even mid-winter may sometimes be chosen with advantage by the archæologist who sets out to trace the lines of ancient earth-works or to follow some boundary dyke through an enclosed country. A morning frost or thin snow, on its disappearing, will often render visible very slight inequalities of the ground which would otherwise have passed unnoticed. At all seasons, and in all parts, the traveller in England who journeys with his eyes open, will find no lack of interest.

\* Keats, *Endymion*.

## VII.

### DEVONSHIRE.\*

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WHEN the learned Jean Bodin, toward the end of the sixteenth century, published his famous treatise *De Republicâ*, there was one among his many critics whose name, from the men of Devonshire and Cornwall at least deserved something better than the complete oblivion into which it has fallen. This is Nathaniel Carpenter, whose father was rector of Hatherleigh, near Okehampton, and who was himself a fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, where he seems to have been one of the most remarkable men of his time. In his 'Geographie delineated forth'—the first complete treatise on the subject published in English—he replies at considerable length to Bodin, who 'is over-peremptorie in overmuch censuring all mountainous people of blockishnesse and barbarisme, against the opinion of Averroes, a great writer, who, finding these people nearer heaven, suspected in them a more heavenlie nature.' Carpenter proceeds accordingly to 'checke Mr. Bodin's bold conjecture' by an express reference to 'our mountainous countries of Dævon and Cornwall,' and by a display of 'choice flowres cropt from that Hesperian garden.'

'It cannot be styled,' he asserts, 'our reproach, but glorie, to draw our offspring from such an aire, which produceth witts as eminent as the mountains, approaching far nearer to heaven in excellency, than the other in height transcend the valleys. Wherein can any province of Great Britain challenge precedency before us? Should any deny us the reputation of arts and learning, the pious ghosts of Jewell, Raynolds, and Hooker would rise up in opposition.'

\* *Quarterly Review*, April, 1859.

A long string of names follows, setting forth the riches of the 'sweete hive and receptacle of our western wittes' in statesmen, soldiers, seamen, philosophers, poets, and in 'many inferior faculties wherein our Dævon hath displayed her abilities;' and whatever the hills and rocky tors of 'our Dævon' may have had to do with the matter, it is certain that the list is one that can be rivalled by few other counties, probably by none. 'I should not,' he concludes, alluding perhaps to the glorification of 'nous autres Français,' implied in the 'bold conjecture of Mr. Bodin,' 'have spun out this theme so long, but to stop their mouthes, who, being sooner taught to speak than understand, take advantage of the rude language and plaine attire of our countrymen, admiring nothing more than themselves, or the magnificent splendours of their own habitation; as though all the witt in the world were annexed to their own schooles, and no flowres of science could grow in another garden. But a rude dialect being more indebted to custom than nature, is a small argument of a blockishe disposition; and a homelie outside may shroude more witt than the silkworme's industry. I have sometimes heard a rude speech in a frize habit expresse better sense than at other times a scarlett robe; and a plaine yeoman with a mattocke in his hand, speake more to the purpose than some counsellours at the barre.'

Mr. Bodin's acquaintance with the sweet receptacle of western wits was in all probability very limited; and, if he ever lighted on it, he must have been considerably edified by this elaborate attack on his general proposition. As a Devonshire man, however, Carpenter may have thought that some defence of his native county was not uncalled for on other grounds. Notwithstanding Queen Elizabeth's often-quoted saying, that 'the Devonshire gentry were all born courtiers, with a becoming confidence,' it is certain that, as well at that time as long afterwards, the remote land of Western Barbary

enjoyed, on certain points of civilization and manners, a very questionable pre-eminence. 'A sweet county?' said Quin the epicure, on his return from eating John Dories at Plymouth—'no, sir; I found nothing sweet in Devonshire—except the vinegar.' In that day the nicer delicacies of the table were evidently quite unknown to the savage natives. But some ignorance of so refined a science might reasonably have been expected from a people whose manners, when Herrick wrote, were 'rockie as their ways,' and whose gentry, according to Lady Fanshawe, however loyal and hospitable, were 'of a crafty and censorious nature, as most used to be so far from London.' After this, we are not surprised to find Clarendon accounting for Monk's 'rough and doubtful' answer to the Duke of Ormond about the regiment to be sent from Ireland for the King, by the fact that 'he had no other education but Dutch and Devonshire.'

The roughness and independence which are perhaps to some extent still characteristic of the men of Devonshire, were no doubt greatly fostered by two geographical features of their county, which have influenced its history from the earliest times—its isolation and the position of its harbours. Shut in by the Cornish peninsula on one side, with which the Saxon 'Defnsætas' felt little sympathy, and by the sea on the north and south, the only land communication of Devonshire with the rest of England lies eastward through Somerset and Dorset. Great woods and deep marshes, however, formed for many centuries a kind of natural barrier, and must long have prevented much intercourse with the neighbouring counties. The men of Devonshire were thus early compelled to depend upon their own resources—a task in the prosecution of which no small difficulties were to be successfully encountered. The earliest notices of 'our Dævon' suggest very different images from those with which its name is now associated—the soft sea breezes, the rose and myrtle-covered cottages, and the

broad green meadows dotted with lazy cows. The country was wild and desolate, and so thickly covered with forest, that 'the woodlands of Dyvnaint' is the expression by which it is generally referred to in the earliest Welsh poems. Aldhelm's 'Dira Domnonia' \* alludes perhaps as much to the moral condition of the district, where the heretical Britons refused to keep their Easter in due season, as to its physical character; but the Domesday Survey, with its miles of wood and coppice, and its thinly scattered population, supplies material for a sufficiently rugged picture, the accuracy of which is confirmed by subsequent chroniclers. Poor and hungry (*jejunum et squalidum*), according to William of Malmesbury, was the land about Exeter, now among the most productive in the county. Its scanty crop of oats, says the Monk of Devizes, somewhat varying Johnson's famous definition, supplied one and the same nutriment to man and beast. There were indeed certain districts, in the South Hams and elsewhere, which seem always to have been noted for their fruitfulness; but the mass of the county had to be reclaimed by patient industry. In Fuller's time the work had been tolerably accomplished, and Devonshire stood high among the agricultural counties. 'No shire,' he says, 'shows more industrious, or so many husbandmen, who . . . make the ground both to take and keep a moderate fruitfulness; so that Virgil, if now alive, might make additions to his Georgicks from the plough-practice in this county.'

If, however, the situation of Devonshire with respect to other English counties was remote and isolated, some compensation was afforded by the many and excellent harbours

\* The expression occurs in one of his poems—

'Quando profectus fueram  
Usque diram Domnoniam  
Per carentem Cornubiam  
Florulentis cespitibus  
Et fecundis graminibus.'



on its southern coast, supplying not less ample opportunity for the development of the energies of its inhabitants by sea, than the reclamation of its heaths and coppices did by land. At a very early period the position of these harbours immediately opposite Brittany and the west coast of France, and later, their convenience as points of departure for the new-found world of America, gave them an importance of no ordinary character, and produced a race of hardy and daring seamen, of whom Westcote, writing in the reign of James I., asserts that 'the whole world brings forth no better.' The difficulties to be encountered both by sea and land went to form the character of the men of Devonshire; in whose history may be traced a certain independence resulting from the isolation of their county—a carelessness and indifference about the great events which were stirring other parts of England—a dislike of all change, as in the matter of the reformation of religion—and at the same time a resolute defence of what appeared to them their own interests, as instances of which we may refer to the rising at the time of the Reformation, and to the conduct of the clubmen during the civil war. Perhaps the buccaneering spirit which prevailed so extensively among the Devonshire adventurers of the sixteenth century, and the fact that many of the pirates who haunted the narrow seas during the reigns of James and Charles I. were natives of Plymouth, Dartmouth, and Barnstaple, may be regarded as illustrations of the same independent and 'unclubbable' temper.

No satisfactory or accurate history of Devonshire exists. The nearest approach to one is the volume which forms part of Lysons' *Magna Britannia*, published in 1822. The earliest collections for the county were made in the first half of the seventeenth century, by Sir William Pole of Shute, Tristram Risdon of Winscot, and Westcote of Shobrook, near Crediton. Westcote's book, printed for the first time



in 1845, is curious, and may be accepted as a very complete 'View of Devonshire' about the year 1630, in spite of certain omissions, of which, as he tells us himself, he had been accused, such as his having made no mention of the great bear which fought nine dogs when the Duke of Anjou, the French King's brother, was in Devonshire. Polwhele's *History of Devonshire*, 1793-98, was never completed, and abounds in every kind of inaccuracy, although gossiping stories occur in it here and there which deserve sifting. A far more important book is the *Damnonii Orientales Illustres, or Worthies of Devon*, of the Rev. John Prince, vicar of Berry Pomeroy, published in folio in 1701, and reprinted, with additional notes, in 1810. Both editions have now become rare. Prince's book was welcomed with a chorus of applause from his brother clergy, many of whom came forward with laudatory verses, as, for instance, Mr. William Pearse, of Dean Prior :—

'You've done the work, sir ; but you can't be pay'd  
Until among those Worthies you are laid :  
Then future ages will unjustly do  
To write of Worthies, and to leave out you.'

The Devonshire *Orientales Illustres* are for the most part something more than 'grands hommes de province ;' and it is scarcely possible to imagine a more delightful volume than might be made of Prince's Worthies, with the additions to be gained by modern research, and with illustrations from good portraits, personal relics, ancient manor-houses, and sepulchral monuments.

The first indistinct appearance of Devonshire through the mists of dawning history connects it with the mysterious Cassiterides, or Tin Islands, which for so many ages were 'hid from those who sailed the main.' There can be no doubt that the tin of Dartmoor was worked at a very early period, nor that the harbours of Devonshire were the chief

emporium from which it was conveyed across to the neighbouring continent, or on board the ships of Phœnician traders. Exeter, the 'Caer Isc' of the Britons, situated, like most Celtic towns, just at the point where the river ceases to be navigable, seems to have been—so far, at least, as what is now Devonshire is concerned (Sir Henry James has revived, and with very strong arguments, the claims of St. Michael's Mount to represent the ancient Iktis)—a principal centre of this ancient traffic. A road, partly accompanying and partly identical with the Icenhilde Way, has been traced quite across the island from Exeter to Yarmouth, resembling, in its general character, the better-known 'Pilgrim's Way' which ran from Southampton or its neighbourhood to the eastern coast of Kent. These roads are certainly not of Roman origin, and they apparently indicate a very ancient commercial intercourse with Armorica (the Veneti?) on the one hand, and the Teutonic tribes in the neighbourhood of the Rhine on the other. Much tin may have been exported from other Devonshire harbours—from the mouths of the Dart and the Plym, for instance, both ancient points of departure for the opposite shores of the continent; but the relics which have been discovered in so great numbers at Exeter—including numerous coins of the Greek dynasties of Syria and Egypt\*—afford a more certain proof of its great importance as the centre of the Mediterranean tin trade, long before the appearance in the West of the legions of Vespasian. In order to find the yet lingering traces of the tribes who laboured in the mines and stream-works, and who peopled the deep coombes of Devonshire at that distant day, we must climb the

\* Numerous coins of Antioch, Chalcis, Zeugma on the Euphrates, and Alexandria, have been discovered at Exeter—always at great depths. In 1810 a large quantity were found about twenty feet below the surface of the present Fore Street, which is in fact the Icenhilde Way. Figures of some of these coins may be seen in Mr. Shortt's *Sylva Antiqua Iscana*.

heights of Dartmoor, and wander over the dusky moorland, amidst whose solitudes they have been preserved. Here, remains of the so-called 'primæval' period—cairns, kistvaens, stone circles, and avenues of upright stones or parallelitha—abound, and, although of comparatively small size, derive a peculiar impressiveness from the wild character of the landscape in which they are set. Among them the 'parallelitha'—as archæologists have agreed to call the long rows of upright stones, placed at regular distances from each other, opening here and there into circles, and extending far along the hill-side—are almost peculiar to Dartmoor, and deserve perhaps more attention than they have hitherto received from Celtic antiquaries. On a small scale they resemble the famous avenues at Carnac, in Brittany. The most important have been described by Mr. Rowe; but there is scarcely a heather-clad tor which does not possess at least one of these avenues, more or less perfect, half hidden among the fern and heath, and generally terminating close to some brook or streamlet. Their object is altogether unknown, and few archæologists will now be disposed to acquiesce in the fantastic Helio-arkite theory with which Mr. Rowe has attempted to connect them. Rude stone foundations of huts, not unlike the Irish 'clog-hauns,' and indications of ancient mine-works, are generally found in their vicinity; yet it is singular that no (or at any rate but one or two, and those imperfect) similar avenues exist in Cornwall, where other Celtic remains abound, and that no tradition whatever respecting them has been preserved among the Devonshire or Cornish miners—a class of men most retentive of all ancient customs and usages connected with their work. Local folk-lore asserts that the stone avenues on Dartmoor, like the hut-circles and the kistvaens, were erected in far distant times, when winged serpents frequented the hills, and wolves inhabited the valleys.\*

\* Mr. Kemble has suggested that some such remains as these are

The whole of this period, however, belongs more or less to the mythic æra of winged serpents. Historically we know nothing concerning it, and its few surviving relics—coin, or trackway, or rude stone monument—return but very uncertain answers to our questions. Nor is the case much altered when the Romans appear on the stage. No complete narrative has been preserved of the conquest of the west of Britain by the lieutenant of Aulus Plautius, in command of the famous Second Legion, and we are left to conjecture—though that conjecture amounts to all but a certainty—that one of the two ‘*validissimæ gentes*,’ which, according to Suetonius, were subdued by Vespasian on this expedition, was that of the Damnonii. The struggle for the ‘garden of Britain,’ as Dean Merivale somewhat prospectively calls the then wild country of Damnonia, judging from the numerous camps and entrenchments which crest the hills, and from the thirty-two battles mentioned by Eutropius, must have been a severe one. Exeter, it is probable, was still important on account of its tin trade, and its possession may have been one of the chief inducements toward the conquest of the West. Coins of Claudius in great numbers, indicating a very early occupation of the city, have been found within its walls; and the last and best historian of Imperial Rome is disposed to regard the strong camps which guard on either side the narrow gorge of the Teign as having witnessed the final struggles between Roman and Damnonian.\* The scene is at any rate picturesque enough for the last act of the drama; and the antiquary, as he traces the strong lines of Wooston, or struggles upward to the watch-tower of Prestonbury, may please himself with the conjecture that it was during the attack on one of these

referred to in early Saxon charters, where ‘*stān-ræwe*’ are occasionally mentioned as boundaries, without any marked epithet implying their antiquity. (*Arch. Journal*, vol. xiv.)

\* Merivale's *Hist. of the Romans under the Empire*, vol. vi. p. 28.

fortresses that the life of Vespasian was saved by his son Titus, then a novice in arms. The incident occurred, at all events, during this Western campaign.

With the exception of numerous relics brought to light from time to time at Exeter, Rome has left but few traces of her four hundred years' occupation of Devonshire. A beautiful tessellated pavement, discovered at Uplyme, in August, 1850, and foundations at a place called Honeyditches, near Seaton, are the only traces of villas which have been found throughout the county. But Devonshire and Cornwall abounded in metal; the strength of the inhabitants was not to be despised; and although the new masters of Damnonia seem to have found small inducement to create a British *Baixæ* at Torquay or Teignmouth, their usual methods for keeping in check a newly subdued country, and for developing its resources, were not neglected here. The Icenhilde Way, which seems to have joined the Foss at Seaton,\* was continued westward into Cornwall, and nearly to the Land's End. Besides the colony of Isca, the most important Roman city in the West, there were two smaller stations on this road, at the points where it crossed the Dart and the Tamar. The line of road itself possibly followed that of an earlier British trackway; but its broad, well-marked crest, still visible in many parts of its course, stamps it unmistakably as a Roman work; and the piers and foundations of a Roman bridge were discovered about fifty years since in the neighbourhood of Newton Abbot, at the place—still called the 'Hackneild ford'—where the road crossed the Teign. Throughout its whole course from Exeter to the Tamar, this ancient road followed much of the same line as the South Devon Railway, though it managed to avoid the difficulties of rock and sea-shore which were voluntarily encountered by Mr. Brunel.

\* See Dr. Guest's Essay on the Four Roman Ways, *Arch. Journal*, vol. xiv.



A Roman relic of a different character is the famous legend of Brutus of Troy, which from the first was connected with the coast of Devonshire. The Brito-Romans, like the Gauls and other races of the West, were not unwilling to share the most honoured traditions of their new masters; and the Romans themselves probably found their full account in imposing them. Thus the 'littus Totonesium' became to the Briton what the shore of Latium was to the descendant of the 'pious Æneas;' and the barbaric stream of the Dart might claim a distant cousinship with the

'Cæruleus Tiberis, cœlo gratissimus amnis.'

The 'Totnes strand' extended at least from Berry Head to the Bolt, and lies directly opposite the point at which the coast of France trends away towards the south. Prawle Point, the most southerly headland of Devonshire, stretching out between Berry Head and the Bolt, and Point St. Matthieu on the opposite coast of Brittany, thus became marked 'stations' for the early mariners who ventured to cross the stormy British sea.\* A tradition of some actual landing upon this part of the coast may possibly have been used as their groundwork by the Roman legend-writers; but the fabric which they constructed evidently made no slight

\* 'Prol in Anglia' (Prawle Point) is mentioned by an ancient commentator on Adam of Bremen's *Historia Ecclesiastica* as one of the stations at which vessels touched in their voyage from Ripa in Denmark to the Holy Land. The passage was made from the 'Sincfala'—an arm of the sea which formerly ran up to Damme, the port of Bruges—to 'Prol,' in two days and a night. The station beyond 'Prol' is St. Matthieu—one day's sail. Adam of Bremen dates about 1070, and his commentator a little later. The original 'Totnes' (the 'projecting ness or headland'—A.S. *totten*, to project—so Tothill, Totteridge) may have been either Berry Head or Prawle. The whole coast was named from it; and the landing of Brutus is fixed by Layamon (ab. 1205) at 'Dertemuthe in Totenes.' The name of the entire district became at last confined to its chief town—probably of British foundation.



impression on the native islanders, and became the approved version of their early history and origin. The stone on which 'Sir Brutus,' as the later romancers called him, first set his foot, is still pointed out in the picturesque old town of Totnes, to which place, as the local rhyme asserts, he first gave its name :—

'Here I stand and here I rest,  
And this place shall be called Totnes.'

His companion, the valiant Corineus,

'Li duk syre Corinée, qui conquist Cornewailles,'

proceeded westward along the coast to Plymouth, where he encountered Goemot, the most powerful of the giant race by which alone the island was at that time peopled. Goemot was overthrown and killed in a wrestling match with Corineus, who became the ancestor of all Cornishmen, and who is supposed to be the 'giant Cormoran,' or, more properly, Corinoran, of whom mention is made in the veritable history of Jack the Giant-killer. The struggle between these mighty men of valour was recorded, at least as late as Elizabeth's time, by what Carew calls the 'pourtrayture of two men with clubbes in their hands,' cut on the turf of the Hoe at Plymouth; and the steps by which Corineus, after his victory, dragged the body of Goemot to the edge of the cliff, whence he flung it into the sea, were pointed out until very recently. A payment of 8*d.* 'for new cutting of the Gogmagoge on the Howe' appears in the town annals for 1567; but the 'pourtraytures' have received more poetic commemoration. Spenser, in that part of the *Faerie Queene* where he records the early history of Britain and the arrival of Brutus, thus apparently refers to them :—

'But ere he had establishéd his throne,  
And spread his empire to the utmost shore,  
He fought great battles with his salvage fone,  
In which he them defeated evermore,  
And many giants left on groaning flore :

That well can witness yet unto this day  
 The Western Hagh, besprinkled with the gore  
 Of mighty Goemot, whom in stout fray  
 Corineus conqueréd, and cruelly did slay.\*

Can Spenser himself have visited 'the Western Hagh' when on his way to or from Ireland? or had he learned its traditions from his patron Raleigh, to whom they must have been sufficiently familiar?

The intercourse with Brittany, for which the position of the 'Totnes shore' afforded so great facility, was evidently sustained during the last years of Roman domination, and during the advance of the English westward. This latter period is one of the highest interest and importance. It is clear that the conquests of the kings of Wessex, west and south of the Hampshire and Somersetshire 'Avon' rivers, were of a very different character from their first settlements in the south-eastern parts of Britain. The Britons of Devonshire and Cornwall appear, after the departure of the Roman legions, under the rule of their own princes, whose power was evidently considerable, and who, during the struggle they had to sustain with the Saxons, found important assistance in the possession of the harbours from which the passage was usually made from the Greater Britain to the Lesser. For more than half a century, in conjunction with the Cymric princes of Wales, they compelled the West Saxons to respect the boundaries which had been agreed on between the two peoples: and it should be added, for the special honour of the county, that the famous Arthur, the 'flower of kings,' and the glory of later romance, by whose victories the establishment of those boundaries was apparently first effected, is to be regarded as one of the earliest and greatest 'worthies of Devon.' Such is at all events the judgment of the two writers best qualified to pronounce on so difficult a question—

\* Book ii., canto 10.

Mr. Rees and Dr. Guest, both of whom consider the historic Arthur to have been a member of the royal house of Damnonia. The power of these Western princes, however, was soon greatly broken; and as the West-Sexe pushed themselves downward from the borders of Exmoor, and gradually established themselves in Devonshire, they either incorporated such of the older inhabitants as remained, with their own families, or the two peoples dwelt peaceably side by side, the Britons no doubt paying some kind of black mail to the invading and more powerful race. In Kent, in Sussex, and in Hants, where the English had appeared nearly two centuries before as heathen adventurers, the Britons had been exterminated. In Devon and Cornwall their chiefs became the 'liege men' of the kings of Wessex, who were now Christian princes. Nor were they so completely powerless as to cause no uneasiness to their English masters, until Athelstan, 'lord of earls and giver of bracelets,' led his 'host' into Devonshire in the year 926; defeated Hoel, chief of the western Britons, in a battle, the scene of which has been traditionally fixed on Haldon, near Exeter; expelled the Britons from the old Roman city of Isca, which they had hitherto inhabited in common with English; and fixed the Tamar as the boundary between the two races. From this time the Britons of 'West Wales'—the name given to Devonshire and Cornwall in the Saxon Chronicle—were effectually quieted, and the line of their native princes can no longer be traced.

The Saxon kings of Wessex had become Christian before they advanced far into Devonshire—a fact which will partly account for their new policy of conciliation, and which must have prevented the destruction of such religious buildings as already existed in the country. The Christian English, in Devonshire as elsewhere, bore witness, by more than one remarkable example, to the 'deep, earnest, conscientious spirit

of self-sacrifice and love of truth which characterised the nation.\* Looking down upon the valley of Crediton, the first seat of the bishopric—a scene which, with its quiet green meadows, its church embosomed among trees, and the roofs of the old town struggling upward between the steep hills on either side, recalls, and most of all beneath the rosy flush of sunset, some exquisite landscape by Turner—who does not feel that its interest is increased tenfold when he remembers that somewhere in the valley below him rose the timbered hall of the English thane, beneath whose rafters Winfrith of Crediton—the St. Boniface who carried the word of truth to the kindred races of Central Germany—first saw the light? In the disposition of the ancient Saxon ‘host’ it is asserted that the men of Kent claimed the van, whilst the not less honourable post of rear-guard was assigned to the soldiers of Devonshire. It would seem that they coveted the post of danger in a nobler warfare. If Kent was the first corner of English ground which became Christian, Devonshire, after the fiery cross had been passed onward, supplied the leader who was to convey it across the narrow seas to the ancient country and homes of the Teutons. Fulda, the great monastery which he founded, and Maintz, the see over which he presided as archbishop, bore witness to him on the Continent; and we may trace the principal events of his life in the frescoes which adorn his beautiful basilica at Munich. In his native valley his only record is a well, which still bears his name, and which, it is pleasant to think, may have supplied water for the baptism of one who was afterwards to ‘sprinkle with healing drops’ so many thousands of the fierce sons of Woden.

St. Boniface was martyred 5th June, 755; but it is probable that the selection of Crediton as the seat of the Devonshire bishopric, first established in the early part of the 10th century, after Athelstan’s victories in the west, was made

\* Kemble, *Sax. in England*.

from the respect with which it was regarded as the birthplace of the German apostle. The dust of some of the primitive bishops is perhaps still reposing there ; but the present church is of far later date ; and to find any relic of those ancient days we must visit Coplestone Cross—perhaps originally a boundary of the parish, but which no doubt also served, after the good old English fashion, to mark a place where the remoter ‘ceorls’ might resort to offer their devotions. Its sides are covered with the quaint interlacing ornaments so familiar to us in the illuminations of Saxon manuscripts, and display the fractures and the weather stains of nearly a thousand years. The family of Coplestone—‘Esquires of the White Spur’—one of the most ancient in Devonshire—

‘Crocker, Cruwys, and Coplestone,  
When the Conqueror came, were found at home’—

of which the late Bishop of Llandaff was a member, takes its name from this cross—the ‘chief stone’ (*copp*, A.S.=a head) of the district.

One other relic of the old English bishopric exists in the well-known and very remarkable manuscript, ‘The Great Book in which all things are wrought poetry-wise,’ which Leofric, the last bishop of Crediton,—in whose days (A.D. 1050) the seat of the bishopric, for the sake of greater security, was removed to Exeter,—left by will to his cathedral. It is still carefully guarded by the cathedral authorities, and reposes, apart from less far-descended volumes, side by side with the manuscript of the Exon Domesday. The contents of this venerable Codex have been made generally available by Mr. Thorpe, whose volume is in the hands of all Saxon scholars.\*

\* It is probably more by good fortune than by intentional reservation that this ‘great book’ is still at Exeter. In 1602 the Dean and Chapter of Exeter gave to the newly established library of Sir Thomas Bodley, at Oxford, eighty-one Latin MSS. from the stores of their own chapter library. Many of these MSS. are fine and early. Among

We have dwelt at some length upon the early intermixture of English and Britons throughout Devonshire, because we believe that in more than one way it has left traces which are even now distinguishable. Not only are Celtic names of places found scattered all over Devonshire, side by side with those of Teutonic origin, but among the peasantry themselves, especially in the southern division of the county, two very distinct types may be recognised. One exhibits the fair hair, blue eyes, and delicate features, which make up the true English ideal—‘*Non Angli sed angeli* ;’ the other, not less strongly marked, displays the longer features, the black hair, and the ‘*colorati vultus*,’ which Tacitus describes as characteristic of the Silures of South Wales, and which may be seen in perfection among the acknowledged descendants of the old Cornish. This latter type seems to us to be that of the ancient Damnonii, once the lords of ‘West Wales.’ Its very counterpart is found on the opposite shores of Brittany, where a new Damnonia was formed by those Britons who voluntarily exiled themselves from Devonshire: and the Breton peasant, with his floating black hair, his gay ribbons, his vast silver buckles, and his creed of half-heathen superstitions, might still find his brother, though somewhat less picturesquely clad, on the moors and in the deep valleys which he left himself so many centuries ago.

The resemblance is certainly not less striking in the matter

them is a service-book given to Exeter by Leofric; and four other manuscripts, which also were gifts of the same bishop to his church. These ‘donations’ to the Bodleian were probably made at the instance of Lawrence Bodley, Rector of Shobrook and Canon of Exeter. He was a younger brother of Sir Thomas Bodley, to whose ‘chargeable work’ at Oxford, as Westcote tells us, he was ‘greatly assistant.’ What possible right he or the chapter could have had to alienate their property does not appear. At any rate, they set at nought the malediction written in each volume by Leofric or his mass-priest. This delivers ‘to bondage with all the devils’ whosoever should abstract the books from St. Peter’s minster at Exeter.



of superstition. Without going so far as Sir John Bowring, who apologises for the superstitions of the Siamese by suggesting that 'his native county of Devon' might supply examples of local folk-lore scarcely less marvellous, we suspect that there are few corners of England in which so much of heathendom still survives. The Penitential of Bishop Bartholomew of Exeter (1161—1186) has been preserved. Many of the heathen practices and beliefs which it condemns, lycanthropy among others, have disappeared from the west; but a long string of superstitions remains, which are perhaps as vigorous and life-like at present as in the twelfth century, or even as in that earlier time when King Athelstan, in the midst of his 'witan' at Exeter, set forth his 'dooms' against the evil practices of witches and warlocks. The peasantry of the remoter Devonshire parishes seem to have changed their homes but little since the time of the Conquest. At all events, many of the existing registers are found to contain the same surnames since their commencement in the days of Elizabeth—

'So far more safe the vassal than the lord.'

Hence the same wild creed has been handed down from generation to generation: the same spots on the lonely moor, and the same gloomy 'pools' in the river that were shunned by his forefathers, are avoided as 'critical' (to use his own word) by the Devonshire peasant now: and many of the same 'carmina' and 'incantationes' that were solemnly condemned by Bishop Bartholomew may still be found in active use among the wise women on the borders of Dartmoor. It is, perhaps, scarcely possible to make any exact division of the existing folk-lore between Celt and Teuton; though it is true that, for the most part, Celtic superstition is gentler and brighter than that of the North, which

'Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,  
And breathes a browner horror on the woods;'

but it is certain that in Devonshire the intermixture of the two races may be traced in folk-lore, not less distinctly than in dialect or in features. 'Arthur's Quoit'—a huge granite block on the edge of Dartmoor—looks, or did look, across to 'Athelstan's Chair,' on the side of the adjoining tor; and Sigmund the Waelsing, who among our English ancestors represented Sigfried, the great hero of the *Nibelungen-lied*, has apparently left his name to the deep pool of Simonsbath on the Barle, in which he is said to have taken a daily plunge (his 'castle' was Simonsbury, on the march line between Devonshire and Somersetshire), and again, side by side with traditions of King Arthur, to the parish of Simonsward in Cornwall. The names of the British king and of the old Teutonic hero occur, in both cases, in districts which are still lonely and uncultivated, and which probably served, at one period of the English conquest, as 'marks' or boundaries, always regarded as sacred, and placed under the protection of some deity or hero. But the great 'mark' of Devonshire—the border which protected the struggling Briton, and to whose long mysterious range of heights and hollows the English colonist looked up from his cultivated fields with an undefined terror—was Dartmoor. It is still the chief guardian of Devonshire folk-lore; and whoever may find himself in the heart of its lonely wastes when daylight is closing, and the air seems to fill with

'undescribed sounds

That come a-swooning over hollow ground,  
And wither drearily on barren moors,'

will scarcely wonder that the spirits of the elder world should not yet have been effectually dislodged from their ancient solitudes. Except that the howl of the wolf is no longer to be heard, and that the red deer, the old 'burgesses' of the forest, have been completely extirpated, the whole district is still the same as in the days of Athelstan or of Canute, and

the terrors of the ancient borderland still cling about it. No Devonshire peasant cares to venture upon it, except in company. The Pixies, thoroughly mischievous elves, who delight to lead all wanderers astray, dwell in the clefts of broken granite, and dance on the greensward by the side of the hill streams. The 'wish-hounds,' breathing flame, and attended by a swart 'master,' who carries a hunting-pole, wander in packs over the dusky wastes of heather. The circles of grey stones which mark the last resting-places of the Celts, become endowed, at midday and at midnight, with a mysterious vitality, and dance like the Pixies; and the rivers themselves, which have their sources on Dartmoor, still retain something of the reverence with which they were anciently regarded. They are spoken of, as Sir Walter Scott has remarked of the great rivers of Scotland, with a certain respect, and an almost personal character is attributed to them. 'Dart' especially—the Dart is rarely heard—bears traces of his former distinction. The 'cry of Dart,' as the moormen call that louder sound which rises from all mountain streams toward nightfall, is ominous, and a sure warning of approaching evil when heard at an unusual distance. His waters become tinged with blue when about to receive a victim—no very rare occurrence. The local rhyme runs thus—

'River of Dart, O river of Dart,  
Every year thou claim'st a heart;'

answering curiously to the German saying, that 'the river-spirit (flussgeist) claims his yearly offering.' \*

The rock and river worship, of which these are evident relics, belonged equally to Celt and Teuton. The Pixies, only found in the western counties, may be traced back both by name (*Pwic*, a goblin) and by their more graceful nature, to a British origin. They are the *Tylwith Têg* (fair family) of Wales. In Devonshire, and especially on Dartmoor, they are seldom visible except as shapeless bundles of rags—a

\* Grimm, *D. Mythol.* p. 462.

peculiarity which seems to belong to them alone among the many tribes of fairy-land. Sometimes, but very rarely, they are seen dancing by the streams dressed in green, the true livery of the small people. They ride horses at night, and tangle their manes into inextricable knots. They may be heard pounding their cider and threshing their wheat far within the recesses of their 'house' on Sheepstor—a cavern formed by overhanging blocks of granite. Deep river pools and deceitful morasses, over which the cotton grass flutters its white tassels, are thought to be the 'gates' of their country, where they possess diminutive flocks and herds of their own. Malicious, yet hardly demoniacal, they are precisely Dryden's 'spirits of a middle sort'—

'Too black for heaven, and yet too white for hell,  
Who just dropped half-way down, nor lower fell'—

a character which cannot, however, be assigned to their unearthly companions, the wish-hounds.

These have no redeeming tinge of white, and belong to the gloomiest portion of the under-world. The wild hunt of Dartmoor is one of those superstitions common to all the north of Europe; but in the especial form which it here takes, it is, no doubt, a legacy from old English heathendom, and the 'master' is the yet lingering representative of Woden, under whose protection the mark or boundary was, according to Kemble, chiefly placed. 'Wisc' or 'wish' was, we learn from the same authority, a name of that grim old deity (lord of the wish or desire); and 'whishtness' is still the Devonshire name for all kinds of supernaturalism. The distant cry of the wish-hounds may frequently be heard, in the solitary recesses of the moors, at noontide, on a Sunday :\* and there are some

\* The wild 'Jäger' of Germany also hunts on Sundays. So Burger's ballad—

'The beams of God's own blessed day  
Had tinted yonder spire with gold,  
And, calling sinful man to pray,  
Loud, long, and deep, the bell had tolled.'

remarkable legends which tell of their appearance in church during service time, and of the exorcisms by which they were expelled, a piece of 'witchery in broad daylight' which takes us back to the struggle between the heathens and advancing Christianity. For, although the 'West Saxe' were nominally Christians when they began to make permanent settlements in Devonshire, they certainly brought with them the heroes and deities of their former creed very little, if at all, lessened in influence. The local names which in Kent and Hampshire so frequently indicate sites of the old religion are equally found in Devonshire; and from many a green hillock and lichen-tinted rock there starts up, at the touch of the etymologist's spear, some antique goblin—

'. . . ' of regal port,  
And faded splendour wan'—

whose very name has long since been forgotten. We might proceed to trace these and other relics of the ancient creed in the local legends, such as that which assigns the raising of the great cromlech at Drewsteignton to three 'spinsters'—no doubt the Saxon fates, the 'mighty wives' who were spinners and weavers, and had much in common with the Valkyriur—the 'fatal sisters' of Gray's well-known poem; or in the traditions which belong to the more ancient families, such as that of the white bird which is said to forewarn the Oxenhams of approaching death. But we must hasten to quit this enchanted ground, over which the 'small people' seem to cast something of their own influence, so difficult is it to break loose from its fascinations. Of the remaining superstitions of Devonshire, active as they are for good or for ill, it is hardly necessary to say much. They differ little, except, perhaps, in their greater life and diffusion, from those of other counties. The white witch drives a good business, for which she is partly indebted to her blacker sister, who 'lays spells' and 'oversees,' so as to—



'Hurt far off, unknown, whomever she espies.'

The process of healing, as brought about by the white witch, involves a number of charms and rhythmical forms, many of which are of the highest antiquity. It was one of these which enabled Grimm to complete a Saxon charm of the heathen period, a fragment of which he had discovered in an ancient manuscript.

Exeter was still the most important city of the West at the period of the Conquest, when Gytha, the mother of Harold, took refuge within its walls, whence, after the city had submitted to the Conqueror, she escaped to the Flat-holm, and then to St. Omer. The details of the siege are preserved to us by Ordericus, whose narrative indicates that the port was frequented by numerous merchants, by whom the tin and wool of the moorlands were, no doubt, conveyed to the commercial towns of Flanders, then commencing their career of prosperity. Of the castle of Rougemont, which William founded close within the walls of the city (the position is precisely that of other Norman castles, such as Canterbury and Rochester), only the fragment of a gate-tower, and this of late Norman character, remains.\* Other Norman castles rose speedily on the 'honours' of the principal leaders who had followed the Conqueror into the West (which he did not visit for more than twelve months after the battle of Hastings), and had received their share of the spoil. Powderham, guarding the entrance of the Exe, and first built by William, Count of Eu, also founder of the castle of Hastings; Okehampton, overlooking 'the woodland and the waste,' whose fine Edwardian ruins, shadowed by great ash-trees, and washed by the brawling stream of the Ockment, are among the most picturesque remains in Devonshire, and

\* The history of Exeter at this time has been fully told, and with complete knowledge of the ground, by Mr. E. A. Freeman, *Norm. Conquest*, vol. iv.



whose park is nightly visited, in her gilt coach, by the ghost of one of its former possessors—a Lady Howard, attended by a black hound, who carries off in his mouth a single blade of grass : a penance which is to continue until the whole park is bare ; Totnes, the castle of Judicael, son of Alured the giant, the keep of which still commands, from its lofty mound, the winding stream of the Dart ; Berry Pomeroy, in the midst of its thick woods, which, besides the ivy-covered ruins of a vast Tudor mansion, built by the Seymours, retains some portions of the stronghold of the Pomeroyes, fragments of whose Norman castle also exist in the Cinglais, not far from Falaise ; Plympton, with its circular Norman keep, which protected the rich valley stretching upwards from the point where the Plym ceases to be navigable ; Lidford, the head of the royal forest of Dartmoor and the prison of the Stannary Courts—

‘ Where in the morn they hang and draw,  
Then sit in judgment after ’—

appropriately haunted by the ghost of Judge Jeffries, in the shape of a black pig ; and Tiverton—one of the castles of the De Redvers, Earls of Devon, and afterwards of the Court-nays—were the principal strongholds constructed by the Normans in Devonshire immediately after the Conquest. None of these, and, perhaps, not even the Exeter Castle of Rougemont, were fortresses of the first class. Against the native English, scattered and few in number, only slight defences were required ; but the coast on either side, open to hostile descents both from Brittany and Ireland, demanded careful watching, and the greater number of the Devonshire castles are accordingly situated either on the banks of navigable rivers, or at no great distance from the sea. But if Englishman and Cornishman were little to be feared, sufficient troubles speedily arose among the Normans themselves,

and the houses of the first great feudal lords of Devonshire rapidly became extinct. Few can be traced beyond two or three generations. The Pomeroy's indeed continued lords of their original castle until the reign of Edward VI., when Sir Thomas Pomeroy joined the Devonshire rising for the old religion, and lost his lands in consequence ; but, with one remarkable exception—that of the Bastards, who still remain on their ancient estates, and whose cousins in Normandy possessed until recently the primitive château of the race—there is not a single Devonshire family the direct descent of which can be traced from an ancestor whose name is recorded in the Exon Domesday.\* The blazonries which, during the feudal period, became most familiarly known among the hills and valleys of the West were those of Norman houses which replaced the first settlers. The sable cross of Mohun ; the three horseshoes of Ferrers ; the lozenges and ermine of Dinham ; the red lion of Nonant ; the vermilion bends of Tracy, whose connexion with Devonshire has been so curiously illustrated by Dr. Stanley ; the twelve golden billets of Champenowne ; the silver bend of Fortescue ; and, most famous of all, the three torteauxes of Courtenay ; these, and many a less distinguished ‘coat armour,’ were displayed on the embroidered banner that floated over the donjon-keep, or amidst ‘solemn pageantries’ enriching the stained windows of minster and of chantry ; and it is, for the most part, the bearings of these later families, and of those by which they were in turn succeeded, that remain to be traced on the

\* It is probable, however, though it cannot be directly proved, that some of the lesser Devonshire families are descended from Norman sub-tenants, mentioned in Domesday : and some of the old English families certainly survived the Conquest. Perhaps amongst these should be classed the Fulfords of Great Fulford—one of the most distinguished families in the county—who can point to a series of ancestors, taking honourable part in the great events of their times, from the reign of Edward I., whom Sir Amys de Fulford accompanied to the Holy Land.

shields of such mail-clad knights as are reposing 'in their habits, as they lived,' on the altar-tombs of the western churches.

In monuments of this class, and in sepulchral brasses—no untrustworthy guides to the ancient condition of a province—Devonshire is far from deficient. They are scattered throughout the entire county, and frequently occur in remote churches, among the hills, or on the edge of the moorland, to which access is even now difficult, and where we should least expect to find such memorials of former prosperity. One of the earliest and most interesting effigies is that of Sir Stephen de Haccombe, in Haccombe Church, dating from the reign of Edward I. Exeter Cathedral contains a good series of early bishops, among which the effigy of Bishop Bronescombe, a native of Exeter, who died in the year 1280, is especially striking. In Crediton Church is an effigy supposed to be that of Sir John Sully, a venerable warrior, who was present at the fight of Halidon Hill, at the siege of Berwick, at the battles of Cressy, Najara, and Poitiers, and who, at the age of 105, gave his evidence on what is known to heralds as the 'Scrope and Grosvenor controversy.' Altar-tombs and effigies, however, are not so numerous in Devonshire as brasses, of which—although they have not escaped the usual fate of such memorials, many of them, perhaps the finest, having been either removed or destroyed—a sufficient number remain, ranging from the 14th to the 17th centuries, to afford a series of very high value and interest. There are none, indeed, which can rival the best of those in the eastern and southern counties, where French and Flemish artists were frequently employed; but the work of those in Devonshire is generally good, their details graceful, and, with some few exceptions, they maintain their position as works of art till the end of the 16th century. Only two ecclesiastical examples occur. The most

complete series relating to a single family is at Haccombe, a church unusually rich in monuments, where are five brasses of Carews; the earliest, dating from 1469, being that of the 'armiger insignis' Sir Nicholas, whose time-worn features appear from under the lifted visor of his salade—a fine and curious specimen. The brasses of Sir John Hawley and his two wives, in Dartmouth Church (1403); Sir Peter Courtenay, in Exeter Cathedral (1409)—

'Devonie natus, Comes, Petrusque vocatus  
Regis cognatus, camerarius intitulatus,  
Calesie gratus, capitaneus ense probatus;'

Dame Elizabeth de Bigbury, in Bigbury Church, whose brass is powdered with scrolls, bearing the words 'JHU mercy,' 'Lady helpe;,' Sir John Crocker, cupbearer to Edward IV., at Yealmpton; John and Jane Greenaway (1529), on the floor of their fine chapel at Tiverton—the merchant with his furred robe, his purse, and inkhorn, the lady with her chate-laine and pomander ball; and Thomas Williams (1566), in Harford Church, who died Speaker of the House of Commons, and who, as we are startled at learning from the inscription at his head,

'Now in heaven with mighty Jove doth raigne,'

sufficiently prove that there is no want of variety among the Devonshire specimens. Armour and civilian costume, the changeful fashions of ladies' robes and the still more surprising vagaries of their head-dresses—heart-shaped, horned, butterfly-shaped, diamond-shaped—may be duly studied in these enduring pages; which prove to us, in conjunction with the statelier recumbent effigies, that the county was, from a very early period, covered by a numerous body of small proprietors, of gentle descent, and entitled to bear arms, such as still forms one of its characteristic features.

The constant changes and fluctuations of these families and their lands—

*‘Nunc mei, nunc hujus, post mortem nescio cujus,’*

are not less distinctly indicated.

If, however, the houses of the lay proprietors, of all ranks and classes, were subject to incessant disturbance, there was one great landowner, whose estates never changed hands. The Church, in Devonshire as elsewhere, retained her property at the time of the Conquest; and the Italian proverb, *‘Dove abitano i fraté e grassa la terra,’* was as applicable here as in other parts of England, or in its own bright South. But the *‘grassezza’* was the result of the monastic settlements, and not the original inducement to their formation. The two Benedictine Abbeys founded in Saxon Devonshire—Buckfast and Tavistock—were each of them established on sites which, when the black monks first took possession of them, could have been little better than tangled brake and coppice. The position of Buckfast, especially, in the upper valley of the Dart, where the river, after *‘fleeting through the moors with a long solitarie course,’* descends between precipitous hills, covered with birch and oak woods, must have been as wild and as lonely as St. Benedict himself could have desired. But the long green meadows which now stretch upward by the river-side were cleared by the first colonists; and the Cistercians—which order was established at Buckfast on the reconstitution of the Abbey after the Conquest—proved themselves as skilful farmers here as they did at Waverley or at Beaulieu. Part of their great barn or *‘spicarium,’* into which stores were gathered from many a grange and outlying manor, still remains; and a greensward path winding southward over the moors is still known as the *‘Abbots’ Way,’* and is said to be the track along which the wool from their hill farms was conveyed



toward Plymouth and Tavistock. The house became one of the wealthiest in the west country ; and, at least in its earlier period, must have been a school of agriculture for the entire district. It could boast, too, of one learned Abbot, William Slade, who, after lecturing on Aristotle in the schools at Oxford, came to meditate on the ' Master ' beside the rocky stream of the Dart. But the general history of the Abbey was uneventful ; and only one sparkle of interest appears at its close, when Gabriel Donne, a monk of Stratford-le-Bow, was appointed its last Abbot, as a reward for his share in the capture of Tyndale the reformer, at Antwerp. It is only within the present century that the remains of the conventual church and of the adjoining buildings have disappeared. They extended, a great mass of ruin, toward the river ; and the larger part of them was used for building a woollen factory, covering the site of the monastic orchards and herb gardens, which rises close beyond an ivy-clad tower of the Abbot's lodging—Old England and Young England side by side. Turner's noble drawing records, as no other pencil could do, the grand features of the general scene, backed by the grey cones of Dartmoor ; but the imagination alone can reconstruct it in the perfection of its ancient beauty, when the Abbey towers rose uninjured from the midst of their green meadows and corn-fields—spots of sunshine between the darker coppice that still clusters over the hill-sides.

Buckfast was possibly the first religious house of importance established in Devonshire. But it was speedily eclipsed by the Benedictine Abbey of Tavistock, founded about the year 960 by Ordgar, Earl or ' Ealdorman ' of Devonshire, whose wealth, says Master Geoffry Gaimar, was so great, that ' from Exeter to Frome ' there was not a town or a city which did not call him master. He was father of the fair Elfrida, famous for the romantic story of her marriage with



King Edgar, and of Ordulph, who completed the works begun by his father at Tavistock, and whose gigantic bones (or at any rate bones said to be his) are still shown in the church there. Ordulph, however, was entitled to the relics of a giant, if the traditions of his great size and strength are to be credited. He was buried at Tavistock, in the church of his own monastery, which the Northmen, coming up the Tavy, destroyed during the lifetime of the first Abbot ; but which, under the auspices of the second, Lyfing, Bishop of Crediton and the friend of Canute, was restored, and increased so much in wealth and in the splendour of its buildings, that it became and remained the chief religious house in the two western counties. The great church, with its shrine of St. Rumon, whose relics had been the gift of the giant Ordulph, was almost equal in size and importance to the Cathedrals of Wells or of Exeter : and the beauty of its site has been especially praised by William of Malmesbury, who enlarges on the benefits which the brethren derived from the adjoining woodlands, from the abundance of fish, and from the running streams which were conducted through the offices of the monastery. The delicious trout of the Dartmoor rivers no doubt found favour in the eyes of the Benedictines, whose cellars, besides 'vins de Rochelle' and Devonshire cider, were supplied with mead and metheglin wherewith to relish the quarters of red deer venison, which, it is to be feared, often found their way inside the walls at undue seasons. The early Abbots—like Aldred, who had offered a golden chalice at the Holy Sepulchre, and brought home his palm branch from the Jordan, and who afterwards, as Archbishop of York, crowned both Harold and the Conqueror—were men of learning and piety. Many of the later functionaries caused no small scandal and disturbance. Two were deposed by the Bishop of Exeter. Abbot John de Courtenay is severely reprovèd for having

' . . . loved the deer to track  
More than the lines and the letters black,'

and for the total want of discipline in his convent; and Abbot Cullyng not only winked at the private suppers of the monks in their cells, but actually permitted them to flaunt about the streets of Tavistock in secular 'buttoned tunics,' and in boots with pointed 'beaks.' At the dissolution the Abbey lands passed, almost entire, to the first Lord Russell, whose descendant still possesses the greater part of them. Some remains of the conventual buildings, but of late character, exist; but the stately church was taken down in 1670, and little more than its foundations can now be traced. Notwithstanding its troublesome abbots, the scholar will look with some respect on the site, and on the few relics of this great monastery. That it ever possessed, as is generally asserted, a school for the preservation of the so-called 'Saxon' language, is to the last degree improbable; but the first printing press ever seen in the West was established here early in the 16th cent ry. A copy of Boethius, 'imprinted in the exempt monastery of Tavistock, in Denshyre, by me, Dan Thomas Rychard, monk of the sayd monastery,' in the year 1525, may still be inspected in the library of Exeter College, Oxford.

The Benedictines possessed six establishments in Devonshire, besides Tavistock; but none of these were of great importance. The farmer-like Cistercians—

'Lancea Longini, grex albus, ordo nefandus,'

as their monastic brethren, envious of their wealth, delighted to call them,—took more kindly to the green valleys of the West, and were masters of five houses in different parts of the county, all of which were large and wealthy. Buckfast was by far the richest. Buckland, founded at the end of the 13th century, was famous for its apple orchards, which, if not the first in Devonshire, soon became the most important; and

it is probably to the zeal of the white monks in procuring the choicest grafts from Normandy, and in the careful management of their trees, that the county is indebted for its pre-eminence in the matter of cider. Ford, on the eastern border, was under the especial patronage of the Courtenays, 'in whose train this house,' says its anonymous chronicler, 'was one of the finest feathers.' Among other orders, the Augustinian Canons possessed the richest establishment in the county—Plympton—which slightly exceeded even Tavistock in the amount of its annual income, although the buildings of the Benedictine Abbey were far more extensive and imposing. The priory of Plympton—of which the curious seal displays the Blessed Virgin with the Divine Infant seated on her lap, and bearing a hawk, hooded and belled, on her wrist—drew its chief revenues from a large tract of unusually rich land at the head of the estuary of the Plym. Much of the town of Plymouth belonged to it; and the earliest church there—the present St. Andrew's—was founded by the Augustinians. Close to the shore of Tor Bay, but surrounded by deep woods which there feather downward to the very edge of the water, rose the stately Premonstratensian Abbey of Tor, the wealthiest house of its order in England, founded by the Briweres toward the end of the 12th century. The mendicant friars established themselves, as usual, in the chief towns, Exeter and Plymouth.

It may be remarked that there were only three female monasteries in Devonshire, and not one in Cornwall. One or two of the great Norman Abbeys had cells or priories in Devonshire, situated, as was generally the case in the southern counties, either close to the sea or on the banks of navigable rivers. This indeed is observable, more or less, of all the religious houses in the county, the sea-board of which is in effect its richest portion, and that which best repaid the cultivation bestowed upon it by the regular orders. Their



manors and estates, however, were scattered over the whole of Devonshire, so as to make it difficult to appreciate their due proportion and extent. But no one can turn over the pages of Dr. Oliver's volume without perceiving that Devonshire supplied her full share toward the support of the monks. They were, in fact, the great landowners of the county.

Fuller's 'all-eating time' has left but scanty morsels of the monastic buildings 'in the dish, for manners' sake;' but the churches of Devonshire present a very ample and varied carte for the consideration of the archæological gastronome. From a careful examination of the notes and papers of the Exeter Architectural Society, it is evident that the entire county, at no long period after the Conquest, had become covered with small churches, the result, no doubt, of the increased vigour of the Norman bishops, fostered, in its turn, by the zeal of Lanfranc and of Anselm. The chief existing relics of these churches are the fonts which abound throughout the diocese. Here and there, too, an enriched doorway or capital survives to tell of what has once been; and the dark masses of Bishop Warelwast's towers still flank the transepts of his cathedral, carrying us back to the days of the 'Beaulegere' and of King Stephen; but no entire church, and no very extensive portions of Norman buildings, remain in the county. With the succeeding period it has fared somewhat better. The existing chancels of many parish churches were built at this time, and display much beautiful Early English work in their windows, sedilia, and piscinae. The Lady Chapel of the Cathedral, commenced by Bishop Bruere, early in the reign of Henry III., affords an example of unusual excellence. But it is to the time of the later Plantagenets, when English chivalry displayed its utmost splendour, and when the religious art of England attained its most perfect development, that Devonshire can point with the greatest pride. Under the second and third Edwards the choir and nave of Exeter Cathedral,

one of the most perfect specimens of Decorated remaining in England, were completed ; the former by Bishop Walter de Stapleton, whose name is dear to every son of Exeter College, which he founded, and whose monument remains in the northern choir aisle ; the latter by Bishop Grandison, the stout defender of the privileges of his see, and the most ' princely ' prelate who ever ruled over it. Beginning at the Lady Chapel, therefore, the student may trace the gradual development of style from Early English to Geometrical, and from Geometrical to Curvilinear, until he finds himself before the western front, the niches of which are peopled with patriarchs, kings, and saints—an elaborate history in stone. It was not fully completed in 1359, when we may imagine the Black Prince, with the captive king of France, pausing for a moment before it, and then, with all the stately train of princes and prelates, disappearing beneath its portals to sweep upward through the richly decorated nave toward the high altar.\* The impressions of these royal visitors must have differed somewhat from those of the Grand Duke Cosmo of Tuscany, who inspected the Cathedral on his way to London in 1669, and who there beheld and wondered at the heretical bishop, ' Doctor Antony Sparrow,' in a marble

\* Knyghton's statement, that the Black Prince landed at Plymouth on his return from France with his royal captive (although in direct opposition to the detailed account given by Froissart of his arrival at Sandwich), is confirmed by extracts from the city records of Exeter, printed by ' Richard Izaak, chamberlain thereof,' in 1681. Under the year 1357, ' John Spicer, Mayor,' he says—' Prince Edward brought over to England John the French King, and sundry of his noblemen, all as prisoners, who landed at Plymouth, and from thence came to this city, where they were honourably received, and so conveyed to London.' In 1371 the Prince was again in Exeter. ' Edward the Black Prince returns sick from France, with the Princess his lady, and Richard their son (who was afterwards King of England by the name of Richard II.), and arrived at Plymouth: in his way toward London came to this city, where they were honourably entertained.'—*Izaak's Remarkable Antiquities of the City of Exeter*, pp. 54, 59.

tabernacle, on a seat covered with red cloth, and wearing on his head 'a small cap, similar to that of the Roman Pontiffs, without any other ornament;' whilst (sight of horror!) 'under the tabernacle, on a level with the floor of the church, in an enclosure of wood, stood the wife of the bishop and his children, no less than nine in number.' The utmost stretch of Italian charity could not forgive so many little bishops, still less the audacious display of them in the wooden enclosure.

The works at the Cathedral, no-doubt, gave rise, as is usually the case, to others in different parts of the county. There is much Decorated scattered through it; but no examples occur that can in any way vie with the great beauty of the Cathedral details. The fine collegiate church of Ottery, lately restored, and now bright in all the glories of polychrome, is chiefly of this time, and well deserves careful study. Few churches, however, remain which are Decorated throughout; and even of the succeeding Perpendicular there are few which do not exhibit very decided traces of Mr. Ruskin's 'pestilent Renaissance.' But it was during this period that by far the greater number of existing Devonshire churches were built; and the size and importance of many sufficiently prove that the great western landowners 'loved the church as well, and gave as largely to 't,' as the barons and franklins in other parts of England. Crediton, Cullompton, Tiverton, and Broadclyst are among the best and most perfect examples in the county of this final period of Gothic architecture.

A certain deficiency in rich and elaborate ornament, which, as compared with those of other counties, may be observed more or less throughout the churches of Devonshire, is probably owing to the nature of the materials with which the local builders were compelled to work. On the borders of Dartmoor, and indeed wherever it was possible, granite has been used; grand and effective in its heavy masses and



simple mouldings, but incapable of being chiselled into the buds and bells, the palm branches and the fern leaves wreathed about the arches and capitals of churches in the sandstone and oolite districts. The felspathic trap, which is the principal building stone in the neighbourhood of Exeter, and in great part of North Devon, is scarcely softer than the granite; and although Caen stone was largely imported, and is the chief material used for the Cathedral, it found in Devonshire a serious rival in a reddish porphyritic 'elvan,' known as the Roborough stone (to the old fortress of which hundred it probably gave name, Ro-burh [A.S.], the red castle), which is still quarried in the neighbourhood of Plymouth. None of these materials lent themselves to elaborate carving; and the very rich stone pulpits which remain in some few churches are worked in Caen stone. But, as if by way of compensation for this deficiency, the wood-work which is still to be admired in the churches of Devonshire, in spite of the terrible havoc to which it has been exposed, even within the last fifty years, probably exceeds in beauty and intricacy of detail that of any other English province. How the native artists luxuriated in twining vine branches, and in all the graceful maze of forest boughs and flowers, we may see in the beautiful screens of Cullompton, of Dartmouth, of Harberton, of Atherington, and of numberless other churches scattered over the county. All were elaborately coloured; and, especially in those churches which belonged to the large monasteries, the lower panels were filled with painted figures of saints, many of which remain, of no ordinary execution, and effective in spite of grotesque accompaniments.

In one other point the churches of Devonshire surpass those of most other counties—beauty of situation. Sometimes close to the old manor-house, and sheltered by the same ancestral woods; sometimes on high ground, and looking across a wide

landscape of coppice, and orchard, and meadow, to the distant ridges of Dartmoor ; and sometimes rising in the midst of the long green coomb, over which the lichen-tinted tower flings the shadow of its own antiquity—it is scarcely possible to determine to which position the ‘*insita species venustatis*,’ such as Bede admired on the hill of St. Alban’s martyrdom, belongs most completely. There is something, too, which finely harmonises with the surrounding scene in the influences, visible on the buildings themselves, of the soft mists and warm breezes of the west ; and the most thorough-paced ecclesiologist would hardly look with an evil eye on the golden mosses and the hart’s-tongue that light up the gray walls with touches of the loveliest colour. Whether he would feel equal sympathy with many details in the interior fittings of remote Devonshire churches, is perhaps more doubtful. Devonshire has by no means been behindhand in zeal for church building and church restoration ; and such results as have been obtained at Cullompton, at Tiverton, at Ottery, at Yealmpton, and in many other places, may be pointed out with no small pride and admiration. True restoration, however, demands not only the delicate hand of an artist, but still more, a delicate feeling for local character and sentiment. All situations will not bear the same treatment ; and there is many a village church, nestled under the tors of Dartmoor, which, with its worn benches, its dimmed window quarrels, its admonitory texts, and its rough granite pavement, is far more impressive in its ancient simplicity than the most elaborate display of carved work and of colour could possibly render it. Such churches retain the old-world character of the district, and we trust will long continue to do so.

The Reformation probably brought but little change to the fabrics of the Devonshire churches. The laity were indisposed to listen to the new teaching ; and the mass of the western

clergy, far from favouring it, seem to have been distinguished by more than usual ignorance and incapacity. If we are to believe Alexander Barclay, whose 'Shippe of Fools' was completed at St. Mary Ottery in the year 1508, and who declares that the eight minor canons of that collegiate church were 'right worthy' of places on board, the richest benefices in the county were by no means bestowed on the most deserving :—

‘For if one can flatter, and bear a hawk on his fist,  
He shall be made parson of Honiton or of Clyst.’

The first Lord Russell, who at a somewhat later period became patron of the latter benefice, seems to have regarded such hawk-bearers with especial favour. It was he who bestowed the living of St. Thomas's at Exeter on Welsh, the chief clerical leader of the Western rebels in 1549, a truly muscular Christian, whose portrait is thus drawn by Hoker, in his account of the rising :—

‘This man had many good things in him. He was of no great stature, but well set and mightily compact. He was a very good wrestler; shot well, both in the long-bow and also in the cross-bow; he handled his hand-gun and piece very well; he was a very good woodman and a hardy, and such a one as would not give his head for the polling; nor his beard for the washing. He was a companion in any exercises of activity, and of a courteous and gentle behaviour.’\*

In spite of his gentleness, however, this worthy person, after the relief of Exeter, was hung in chains on the top of his church tower ‘in his popish apparel, with a holy-water

\* This passage, as given in Holinshed, is quoted by Sir Walter Scott in a note to *Marmion*, apropos of

‘The priest of Shoreswood : he could rein  
The wildest war-horse in your train;  
But then, no spearsman in the hall  
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.’—*Canto I.*

A note appended by Lockhart to the later editions of *Marmion* suggests that the clerk of Copmanhurst in *Ivanhoe* was indebted for some of his characteristics to the description of Welsh.

bucket and sprinkle, a sacring bell, a pair of beads, and such other like popish trash, hanged about him ; and there he remained a long time. . . . He very patiently took his death.' Before this result was attained, Exeter had been besieged for six weeks by the 'commons' from all parts of the county, who 'brought with them their wives, horses, and panniers, promising them upon such a day that they should enter the city, and then to measure velvets and silks by the bow, and to lade their horses home with plate, money, and other great riches.' The remoteness of the county, the slight intercourse of its inhabitants with the rest of England, and the absence, according to Hoker, of 'learned' teachers, were all unfavourable to the proposed changes ; and with small exception the entire county was opposed to what were called the 'King's Proceedings.' About 4000 of the rebels are said to have fallen in the various skirmishes at Exeter, at Feniton, and on Clyst Heath, in which latter fight, such was the valour and stoutness of the Devonshire men, 'that the Lord Grey reported himself, that he never, in all the wars that he had been in, did know the like.'

With the accession of Elizabeth commences the golden age of Devonshire. From a very early period Dartmouth had been the principal harbour on its southern coast ; but, early in the sixteenth century, it suffered much from deposits brought down by the river from stream-works on the moors ; and although Dart accompanied Tamar and Plym to the feast of the rivers in Spenser's days, he appeared in somewhat damaged condition—

'And Dart, nigh choaked with sands of tinnie mines.'

Dartmouth never recovered its importance ; and the expeditions to America and the South Seas, which became so frequent in the reign of Elizabeth, gave the pre-eminence at once and finally to Plymouth, which had been steadily rising

as Dartmouth declined, and which, as the best and most western harbour, was preferred as their point of departure by the many voyagers to the 'Newfound world.' A passion for this American 'adventure' took possession of the entire county; and it would be difficult to produce a roll of more distinguished names than those of the Devonshire seamen, whose exploits belong to the history of their country, and whose weather-beaten countenances raise such a host of romantic associations as they look out upon us from the stiff panels of Mark Garrard or of Zuccherro. In October, 1562, Captain John Hawkins set out for the West Indies with three vessels—the 'Solomon,' the 'Swallow,' and the 'Jonas'—the first of the long series of expeditions which sailed from Plymouth, of which place Hawkins was a native. His exploits against the Moors, his share in establishing the slave-trade (a matter in which the cold blue eye of his portrait is not without its testimony), and his bravery at the time of the Armada, need only be alluded to here. The daring spirit of the father was inherited by the son, Sir Richard Hawkins, who in 1593 set out on a voyage round the world, but was taken by a Spanish squadron on the coast of Chili, and for nine years kept a prisoner in Spain. He it was, says the Devonshire tradition, who was the hero of the well-known ballad—

'Will you hear a Spanish lady,  
How she wooed an Englishman?'

and should any one be sceptical enough to doubt the fact (seeing that the honour is claimed by many other counties), he may still inspect, in the possession of one of Sir Richard's descendants, the actual jewels which were sent by the fair Spanish dame to the 'sweet woman,' whom, as the 'gallant captain' confessed, he had already 'to his wife' in England:—

'Commend me to thy lovely lady;  
Bear to her this chain of gold,  
And these bracelets for a token,  
Grieving that I was so bold.'



Possibly Sir Richard had already experienced something of the Spanish temper at home. A certain William Downman, mayor of Plymouth after Sir Richard's return, had formerly been his servant, 'as,' says a MS. Chronicle of the town, 'was his wife to the Lady Hawkins, who, disdaining to sit below one that had been her maid, endeavoured to keep the upperhand, which the other attempting, the lady struck her a box on the ear. It made great disturbance; at length it was composed, and Sir Richard gave the town a house in the Market-street for satisfaction.'

The local traditions of Sir Francis Drake, the companion of the elder Hawkins during his last voyage, when both perished, have been preserved by Mrs. Bray in her 'Banks of the Tamar and Tavy.' In the recollections of Plymouth and its neighbourhood he survives rather as a public benefactor than as a great seaman and adventurer. It was by his advice and assistance that the 'leat' of water, from which the town is still principally supplied, was brought into it from the sources of the Meavy river, distant nearly fifteen miles; and just as in Bedouin tradition Alexander is said to have brought the waters of the fountains of Solomon, near Tyre, 'from Baghdâd, by the help of a Jân,' the local folk-lore asserts that on this occasion Sir Francis Drake was assisted by more than natural powers. After a due amount of magical ceremony, he mounted his horse, and rode from the spring-head, over moor and through valley, toward Plymouth. As his horse's tail swept along the ground it opened a course for the water, which followed in the rider's track till it reached the fountain at the head of the town. This fountain, a quaint old structure, was removed about thirty years since.

Drake and Hawkins take the earliest place in the catalogue of Elizabethan heroes connected with Devonshire. A second pair, Gilbert and Raleigh, united as well by family ties as



by common reputation, follow closely in their wake. The mother of both was a Champernowne of Modbury, one of the most distinguished families in the West; and if it be true that genius is generally inherited from the maternal side, the mother of two such sons is entitled to special respect and consideration. The establishment of the fishing trade on the coast of Newfoundland is due to Sir Humphrey Gilbert; and it is worth remarking that the ancient Christmas play, now rarely to be seen in Devonshire, may still be admired at St. John's, whither it was conveyed by the inhabitants of certain Devonshire parishes, who, until very recently, looked to the Newfoundland trade as their regular means of support. The character of no adventurer of that age was loftier than that of Gilbert; and Queen Elizabeth herself, according to the old rhyme, graciously observed that she

'. . . held all men not worth a filbert.  
Compared unto Sir Humphrey Gilbert.'

His 'lively effigies,' in Prince's time, 'was yet remaining in his grand-nephew's house at Compton; which,' he continues, 'I have there seen in this figure. The one hand holdeth a general's truncheon, and the other is laid on the globe of the world: Virginia is written over; on his breast hangs the golden anchor, with the pearl at peak,'—a present from the queen—'and underneath are these verses—

'Here you may see the portrait of his face,  
Who for his country's honour oft did trace  
Along the deep; and made a noble way  
Unto the growing fame, Virginia.  
The picture of his mind, if ye do crave it,  
Look upon Virtue's picture, and ye have it.'

What has become of this portrait?—than which few would be more interesting either at Greenwich or in the National Portrait Gallery. Compton Castle, not far from Torquay, which was acquired in marriage with an heiress of the Comptons, and to which the descendants of Sir Humphrey

removed from the ancient house of Greenaway on the Dart, has long been in ruins. Pictures and 'plenishing' have of course disappeared ; but the building itself, dating perhaps from the very beginning of the fifteenth century, is one of the finest remains of a fortified house in England.

It is asserted by gossiping old Aubrey, that Sir Walter Raleigh, the half-brother of Gilbert, retained a strong Devonshire accent to the end of his life, notwithstanding his early removal from the county and his subsequent 'climbing' into Court favour. Something of the brightest portion of his life —

'The fragrance of the old paternal fields'—

hung about him throughout all his wanderings and vicissitudes. That he looked back with some longing toward his early haunts is certain from his eager desire to become the purchaser of Hayes, his birthplace, a farm in the parish of East Budleigh, which his father (himself a sea captain) held on lease. The house is still standing, and the room in which Sir Walter is said to have been born is still pointed out. More important, however, and perhaps more authentic relics are the remains of Fardel, near Ivy Bridge, the hereditary seat of the Raleighs—an honourable family, 'which,' says Sir William Pole, 'needed no other father than such as begot them, and no other mother than such as bare them,' although Sir Walter himself was 'traded in his time as an upstart, a Jack, and a new man.' Of the Elizabethan heroes of Devonshire, the only one who could not directly repel these 'unpleasant'st words' was Sir Francis Drake. All the others were gentlemen 'of coat armour ;' and the 'fusils in bend argent' of the Raleighs no doubt figured in the great hall and in the chapel windows of Fardel.

Throughout this period the narrow streets and quays of Plymouth were kept alive by the constant arrival and departure of the seamen's barks and pinnaces ; and many an

'heir of Linne' found his way there in the hope of getting a passage to the golden lands of Virginia or Florida, whose marvels were then filling all imaginations. So, at least, suggests the old ballad, true of many besides the 'lusty Stukely':—

'Have over the waters to Florida,  
Farewell good London now ;  
Through long delays on land and seas  
I'm brought, I cannot tell how,  
In Plymouth town, in a threadbare gown,  
And money never a deal.  
Hay ! trixi trim ! go trixi trim !  
And will not a wallet do well !'

The romance and interest of the time, however, culminate in the arrival of the Armada. No reader will have forgotten the life-like picture which has been drawn by Mr. Kingsley in the concluding chapters of 'Westward Ho !'; and one of the first recollections occurring to the visitor who stands for the first time on the heights above Plymouth, will be of that eventful day when the news was brought to the English Admiral, then, says the local tradition, playing at bowls on the Hoe, how the mighty crescent fleet, the horns of which were seven miles asunder, was slowly labouring up the Channel, 'the winds' in Camden's words, 'being as it were tired with carrying them, and the ocean groaning under their weight':—

'Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the wall ;  
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgcumbe's lofty hall ;  
Many a light fishing bark put out to pry along the coast,  
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post.  
With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff comes ;  
Behind him march the halberdiers ; before him sound the drums ;  
His yeomen round the market-cross make clear an ample space,  
For there behoves him to set up the standard of her Grace.  
And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance the bells,  
And slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon swells.'

On that anniversary, July 19, the mayor and corporation always 'wore their scarlet,' and treated their visitors to cake

and wine. In the parish registers and account books the year is marked as that of the great deliverance ; and in one, that of Milton Abbot, after intimations of the condition of watch and ward which had prevailed throughout the county, such as charges for scouring the parish harness (armour), and repairing the parish butts for the archers, are inserted the words 'The Byble Respyted,' an evident allusion to the great Protestant victory.

The importance of Plymouth and its harbour continued steadily to increase during the succeeding reigns. In the summer of 1620, the famous 'Mayflower'—the ship in which the Pilgrim Fathers sailed to New England—was compelled by contrary winds to put in first at Dartmouth, and afterwards at Plymouth, having brought the little band of emigrants from Delft to Southampton. The pilgrims, according to a journal of their proceedings published in 1622, 'were kindly entertained and courteously used by divers friends dwelling at Plymouth ;' and it seems to have been in recollection of the kindness shown to them at this port, from which they took their final departure, that they gave its name to their new settlement in America. It is probable that the Separatist pilgrims found many congenial spirits at Plymouth. The town was essentially Puritan, as, indeed, was the greater part of Devonshire at the commencement of the struggle between King and Parliament.

This, however, by no means ensured the peace of the county. Mr. Davidson's very useful '*Bibliotheca Devoniensis*' contains the titles of a vast mass of pamphlets relating to Devonshire at this time, most of which may still be consulted in the British Museum. They are filled with curious local details, well meriting disinterment at the hands of some zealous antiquary, and sufficiently attest the trials and troubles to which 'our Dævon' was exposed during that disastrous period. The first marked event in the county was the death of Sidney

Godolphin, one of the 'four wheels of Charles's wain,' at Chagford—a place, says Clarendon, which, 'but for the misfortune of his death, could never have had a mention in the world.' According to a local tradition, it was in the open granite porch of the 'Three Crowns,' one of the most picturesque of hostels, that this 'young gentleman of incomparable parts' fell by a musket-shot during one of those skirmishes which were then frequent throughout the open country. Of the towns, Plymouth was seized, and defended by its inhabitants in the absence of the King's general; and, in spite of vigorous attacks on the part of the royalists, held out to the close of the war. Exeter, at first Parliamentary, and made the head-quarters of the Parliamentary general, the Earl of Stamford, was taken by Prince Maurice, for the King, in the autumn of 1643. The Queen took refuge within its walls, and here gave birth to her daughter, Henrietta Maria. It was at this time also that Fuller the historian sheltered himself from the storm at Exeter, where he printed his 'Good Thoughts in Bad Times,' dedicating his book to the unhappy Queen; and here we may suppose him to have first observed the use of gambadoes, 'much worn in the West, whereby, whilst one rides on horseback, his legs are in a coach clean and warme, *in those dirty countries*'—a somewhat disparaging expression, perhaps suggested by recollections of weary rides through narrow Devonshire lanes, deep in mud, and overhung by dripping branches. Through such lanes King Charles had himself ridden, when he passed westward into Cornwall in 1644, in pursuit of Essex and his forces—a royal progress which must have contrasted sadly enough with that made in the first year of his reign, when he visited Plymouth attended by Duke 'Steenie' and all his court, and witnessed the departure from the harbour of Lord Wimbledon's ill-fated expedition to Cadiz. It was on this occasion that the King and his retinue were entertained by Sir Richard Reynell, at his house



of Ford, near Newton Abbot. Charles passed two days there ; and among the delicacies of the bills of fare, which have been preserved, besides an infinite number of 'beeves,' 'mutt-tons,' and 'veals,' appear 'one barnacle, one hernshaw, two nynnets, six sea-pyes, three pea-hens, and two gulls.' Little did King Charles imagine, as he presided at the board graced by these remarkable *entrées*, that the Prince who was finally to chase the Stuarts from their throne would pass his first night in England beneath the roof-tree of Ford. William of Orange halted there after landing at Brixham. The bed, of carved mahogany, in which he slept, was preserved at Ford until very recently, and is perhaps still in existence.

How completely, after the fall of the chief Western royalists,—

'The four wheels of Charles's wain,  
Grenville, Trevanion, Godolphin, Slanning, slain,'

—the license of their troopers caused the Cavaliers to be detested throughout the county, is evident from various indications ; among the rest, from a contemporary pamphlet, which sets forth how a boy 'about Crediton in the West' was carried into the air by the devil, for the express purpose of inspecting the preparations making in the infernal regions for the fitting reception of Goring and Grenville. The clubmen of the county declared for the Parliament in September, 1645 ; and Fairfax, who entered Devonshire with his army in the following month, encountered no serious check in his course of reducing the few towns and garrisons that still held out for the King.

The story of Fairfax's proceedings in Devonshire is told at full length by his chaplain, Master Joshua Sprigge, in his '*Anglia Rediviva*'—a short black-covered volume, which the descendants of the Western Cavaliers, when they fell upon it in the hall-window of some Puritan neighbour, must have regarded with much the same horror as Independent Tomkins



displayed at the sight of the folio Shakespeare in the oriel at Woodstock. The house of Great Fulford, with its picturesque park and noble beech avenues, was among the first to surrender, and was placed under the command of Colonel Okey, the regicide. Before advancing to Ashburton, near which town the chief remaining strength of the royalists was collected, Fairfax reviewed his troops within the area of the ancient camp of Cadbury, on a lofty hill commanding the windings of the Exe—a gathering which, with all its accompaniments, may safely be commended to any historical painter in quest of a picturesque subject. Ashburton—where the house in which Fairfax lodged is still pointed out—speedily fell; and during the skirmishes which took place in its immediate neighbourhood Cromwell appears on the scene, visiting Devonshire for the first and only time. He fell suddenly upon Wentworth's brigade at Bovey Tracey, disturbing the officers at cards, as Puritan scandal-mongers delighted to repeat, and compelling them to beat a hasty retreat to Ilington, the manor and birthplace of Ford the dramatist, where they garrisoned themselves in the church. In June, 1646, Charles Fort, at Salcombe, near Kingsbridge, the last which held out for the King in Devonshire, was surrendered on honourable terms by its governor, Sir Edmund Fortescue, to Colonel Welden, the Parliamentary governor of Plymouth, who had blockaded it for four months. Its battered ruins may still be visited; and the keys, long preserved at Fallapit, the ancestral seat of the Fortescues, are still in the possession of the head of that family.

So, for the present, the cause of the Stuarts was extinguished in the West. The death of Admiral Blake, at the entrance of Plymouth harbour, in August, 1657, on his return from the expedition to Santa Cruz, and that of Major-General Lambert in the severe winter of 1683, on the island of St. Nicholas, under Mount Edgecumbe, after an imprisonment of

twenty-one years, were of course regarded with very different feelings by the representatives of the two great parties. In the curious MS. journal of James Yonge, a member of an ancient Devonshire family who was resident at Plymouth during the latter part of the seventeenth century, Lambert figures as the 'arch-rebell,' and his death in his island-prison is duly recorded. The barren little rock hardly admitted of such successful growing of tulips and carnations, 'the best that could be had for love or money,' as the General had delighted in at Wimbledon: but Lambert was a painter of flowers, as well as a cultivator of them, and he may have soothed many a weary hour by the transfer of their brilliant hues to canvas, as well as by the solution of mathematical and arithmetical problems, which was another of his favourite amusements. A curious account of his interview with Myles Halhead, a Quaker, will be found in the valuable series of Historical Notes collected from *Notes and Queries*. The Quaker seems to have visited the old General at Plymouth chiefly for the sake of pointing out that his troubles had come upon him in retribution; 'for that truly, John Lambert, you soon forgot your promises . . . and made laws, and consented to laws, and suffered and permitted laws to be made against the Lord's people.'

The great event of 1688—the landing of William in Torbay—once more somewhat ruffled the tranquillity of Devonshire. Lord Macaulay's brilliant pages are in effect so many photographs of the events from the arrival of the Prince at Brixham to his final departure from the county; but in spite of the long array of Devonshire thanes who are there recorded as hastening to join themselves and their followers to the Protestant ranks, it is certain that a considerable time elapsed before the new state of things became generally accepted,—

'Ere general freedom, equal law,  
Won to the glories of Nassau  
Each bold Wessexian squire and knight.'\*

\* Akenside—Letter to Sir F. Drake.

The feeling, to borrow a phrase of Walpole's, may have been not so much Jacobite as 'only not Georgeabite;' but there was many a squirelet who held, with Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone, that, 'what with French antics and book-learning, and the new turnips, and the rats, and the Hanoverians,' very little indeed was left of the real Old England. Now and then we meet with indications of something more serious than grumbling. A seizure of arms was made at Plymouth. The Duke of Ormond, 'Queen Anne's darling,' appeared at the entrance of the harbour with a French armament, intending, on his landing, which never took place, to set up the standard of the Stuarts; and Sir Coplestone Bamfylde was carried off to the Tower in state, on a charge of treasonable correspondence with the Pretender; for which the ten days' journey to London in his coach and six, with the necessary accompaniments of upsets and stickings in the mud, was perhaps sufficient punishment. There was, however, no real disturbance in Devonshire; and throughout the reigns of the Georges the county steadily increased in wealth and prosperity, although not without such changes as were more or less distasteful to the Sir Hildebrands:—

'The capacious tankard of double-racked cyder,' writes Chappell of Exeter, about the time of George III.'s accession, 'or wholesome tho' home-brewed October beer, improved by the addition of a nut-brown toast,—with which, and perhaps a broil'd rasher, or a steak of hung beef, the hospitable Franklin of the last century could regale himself, his neighbours, and friends,—are now rejected for a complete set of tea-tackle and a sugar-loaf; the bounties of Ceres and Pomona undervalued, and the dispiriting infusion of the leaves of an Asiatic shrub prefer'd to the exhilarating beverage derived from the red-streak apple-tree or the barley-mow. The glittering rows of pewter plates and platters, which of yore adorned the dresser and shelves of the neat and œconomic housewife, give place to frangible earthen dishes and saucers, less fit for their purposes than even the wooden trenchers in use before the neglect to cultivate and preserve our timber made more work for the miners, pewterers, and cutters. But glazed earthen plates must now dull the edges of our knives; and the country squire, to keep a step higher than his neighbouring farmers, to please his

modish madam, and escape being censured as a tasteless churl, must prefer the brittleness and frailty of Dresden porcelain to the solidity and permanence of Damnonian pewter.' \*

Many distinguished Devonshire worthies have already been mentioned; but the list of those less immediately connected with the actual march of events is far longer, and certainly not less important. The 'pious ghosts' of Hooker, of Jewell, and of Reynolds, need scarcely be called up here. The birthplace of the second, Bowden, an old farmhouse in the parish of Berry Narbor, is still pointed out: of the other two, no record survives in their native county. Nor must we delay longer among the lawyers—although the list is no ordinary one, beginning with Henry the Sixth's Lord Chancellor Fortescue, author of the remarkable treatise '*De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*,' and ending with Sir William Follett. Over the poets, the streams and valleys of the West exercised a more direct and lasting influence. Three, who have obtained permanent places in the literature of England, were resident in Devonshire at the commencement of the civil war—William Browne, author of *Britannia's Pastorals*; Ford, the dramatist; and Robert Herrick. The two former were natives; and, if the principle on which Fuller has arranged his worthies is to hold good, '*Non ubi nascor sed ubi pascor*,' Herrick must also be claimed as a Devonian, since his *Hesperides* are at least as full of the daffodils and violets that star the steep crofts and orchards of Dean Prior, as of any recollections carried westward from Cheapside, or from the Apollo at Temple Bar. Ford, the gloomy and terrible subjects of whose tragedies seem partly to have reflected his own temperament, had returned from London to die at his birthplace, Ilington, near Ashburton. The melancholy music of his verses will haunt the wanderer beneath the gnarled and storm-twisted oaks

\* *Review of part of Risdon's Survey of Devon.* Chappell was for many years the steward of Sir William Courtenay.

which there stretch upward toward the heaths of Dartmoor ; but with the exception of an occasional word, extinct elsewhere, but still to be heard in Devonshire, there is little trace in his works of any influence caught from the scenery and associations of his native district, nor does he seem to have been himself remembered there. And Prince's worthies of the name of Ford are authors of 'Treatises about singing Psalms,' and the like—

'There goes the parson, most illustrious spark !  
And there, scarce less illustrious, goes the clerk.'

As some compensation for the want of Devonshire allusions in Ford, the *Britannia's Pastorals* of Browne exhibit throughout a series of careful landscape paintings from his native county. The banks of the Tavy, the Walla brook which flows into it, and the wooded hollow of Ina's Coombe, close to Tavistock, are all directly referred to ; and the copses, the steep ferny lanes, and the wild flowers which make up the staple of his pictures, are all studies from the same neighbourhood. The many direct local allusions in Browne's poems have been well illustrated by Mrs. Bray, herself one of the celebrities of Tavistock.

The wildest district of Devonshire—the forest of Dartmoor—has found an ardent and accomplished laureate in Carrington, whose poem reflects its character with most entire and loving fidelity. The wide shadow-swept wastes of heather, the sound of rocky waters, and the turf smoke slowly ascending through the sharp mountain air, come back to us as we turn over its pages. The wanderer on Dartmoor should by all means make Carrington his companion. His poem has well been compared to certain wines, which can be drunk in perfection nowhere but among their native hills. As in all similar regions, the borders of the central moors are more picturesque than the highland itself, which forms the water-



shed of the county, and rises, at its greatest eminence, to a height of more than 2000 feet. Deep, narrow coombes, covered with a coppice of birch and oak, lie between the hills that extend like bastions into the lower country; and each of the river valleys—the Plym, the Dart, the Teign, and many a lesser stream—presents scenes of ancient untouched woodland, and, in its upper course, of granite-strewn glen and ferny hill, such as might well inspire a far worse poet than Carrington. The tourist may make a circuit of Dartmoor, never leaving, for more than a hundred miles, this wild and romantic scenery, far more suggestive of the days of Sir Tristram or of Britomart than of these brisker times of telegraph and railroad. It resembles, and very closely, those parts of Galloway—the scenery of Guy Mannering—which form a ring of wooded glens about the central moors and mountains. But the Devonshire landscape impresses us with a far greater sense of security and ancient peacefulness than that of Dumfriesshire or the Stewartry. No rude ‘tower of lime and stane’ rises on its heathery knoll at the head of the glen, or looks far out over the moors to catch the first glance of the distant forayers. The only enemies feared by the Devonshire franklin were ‘winter and rough weather;’ and the ancient farmhouses, with their granite porches, their great walnut trees, and the beehives ranged under their casements, are generally niched into the sunniest corner on the hill-side, or preside over the green quiet meadows through which the river sparkles onward. In early spring—

‘When all the hills with moor-burn are ablaze,’

and the peaks of the distant tors are half shrouded by wreaths of white smoke—when the bright green of the birch woods and larch plantations rivals the golden blaze of the furze, and every coppice is fragrant with great tufts of primroses, the scene from a hill-side on the Dartmoor border is exceeded in

beauty by none with which it can fairly be compared, either in England or in Scotland.

Almost every class of scenery, however, has its representative in the county, which supplies a not less wide range of climate, from the bracing highland atmosphere of the moors to the sunny warmth of the south coast, where oranges and citrons ripen in the open air, and where flowers which are elsewhere treated as exotics—the lovely ‘*Devoniensis*’ rose among them—flourish unprotected throughout the winter. Really to enjoy Devonshire it is still necessary to wander among the intricate network of lanes which cross and recross it in all directions. And if the distant views are somewhat excluded, and roving propensities somewhat checked, no traveller with the eye of an artist will quarrel with the steep banks covered with ferns and wild flowers, and in due season scarlet with strawberries—‘most toothsome to the palate,’ says old Fuller, who has placed them among the ‘natural commodities’ of Devon ‘(I mean if with clarett wine or sweet cream), and so plentiful in this county that a traveller may gather them sitting on horseback in their hollow highwayes.’ Such was the depth of these ‘hollow highwayes’ in Westcote’s time, that he tells us a man might have then ridden from one end of Devonshire to the other without seeing a single flock of sheep. Perhaps the feat might still be accomplished ; but the tourist must in such case carefully avoid the magnificent panoramas which open here and there from the lanes themselves, and which may always be seen by turning into the fields at the hill-crests.

Until the tall hedges of the Devonshire lanes have entirely disappeared from the land—a consummation which, it may be feared, will follow in the train of modern agriculture—the ancient dialect of the county will continue to maintain its place. It will, no doubt, become obsolete as the country is more and more opened by railways and good roads ; and in

the meantime the diligence of the local antiquary should be exerted to procure as complete glossaries as possible.\* The dialect should be of no small interest to archæologists, since, according to Giraldus Cambrensis (writing in 1204), the 'more ancient mode of speaking lingered longer in Devonshire than elsewhere,' although, he adds, the language now appears more unpolished — 'incomposita.'† The 'ancient mode of speaking' was the genuine Saxon of Wessex; and words and phrases may yet be heard in Devonshire which have never become extinct through all the changes of a thousand years. In what degree beauty, as well as antiquity, is to be found in the local dialect, is a question which will be variously decided, according as the judges are Devonians or not. Roger North, who accompanied the Lord Keeper Guildford on his circuit at the end of Charles II.'s reign, insists that 'the common speech of Devonshire is more barbarous than in any other part of England—the north not excepted.' Few certainly would now be found to agree in this judgment, although the stranger may still meet with many a word rusted with age, and requiring explanation to all but antiquarian ears. Where this is difficult, let us hope it may be as judiciously avoided as in the case recorded by Peter Pindar in his 'Royal Visit to Exeter':—

'Now Varner Tab, I understand,  
Drode his legs vore, and catched the hand,  
And shaked wey might and main :  
"I'm glad your Medjesty to zee,  
And hope your Medjesty," quoth he,  
"Wull ne'er be mazed again."

\* The best illustrations of the Devonshire dialect which exist at present are the *Exmoor Scolding* and Mrs. Gwatkin's *Dialogue*. The locality in which a word is found should always be carefully noticed, since the difference between the dialects of North and South Devon is considerable.

† *Cambria Descriptio*, l. i. c. 6, quoted by Sir Frederick Madden, Preface to Layamon's *Brut*, p. xxvi.

"Mazed, mazed—What's mazed?" then said the King,  
 "I never heerd of zich a thing;  
 What's mazed, what, what—my Lord?"  
 "Hem," zaid my Lord, and blowed his nose;  
 "Hem, hem, Zir—'tis, I do suppose,  
 Zir—zome old Devonshire word."

Devonshire is now almost entirely an agricultural county; for, although the woollen trade still lingers in a few towns, it is not sufficiently extensive to be of great importance, and now disperses but slender 'labours of the loom'—

'Through Dart, and sullen Exe, whose murmuring wave  
 Envies the Dune and Rother, who have won  
 The serge and kersies to their blanching streams.'\*

Yet Devonshire was at one time a centre of this manufacture. In the 12th and 13th centuries, Totnes was one of the chief clothing towns of England; and 'hose of fine Totnes' appear in sundry romances and in the Welsh 'Mabinogion,' when the dress of an important personage is described as especially splendid. Crediton became the later wool mart of the county. 'As fine as Kirton (Crediton) spinning,' was a general proverb; and Westcote asserts that 140 threads of woollen yarn spun in that town were drawn together through the eye of a tailor's needle, 'which needle and threads were, for many years together, to be seen in Watling Street in London, in the shop of one Mr. Dunscombe, at the sign of the Golden Bottle.'

\* Dyer's *Fleece*.

## VIII.

### ROBERT HERRICK AND HIS VICARAGE.\*

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MY DEAR —,

Among the recollections of your Devonshire visit last summer, you will not have thrown overboard that bright afternoon we spent upon the steep hill-side over-looking Dean Prior—Herrick's old vicarage. I remember that, although you insisted on the cavalier poet's having been marvellously overrated, you allowed that a certain pleasant feeling of old England—an atmosphere of the days

‘ When late Elizabeth,  
And later James came in,’

like that which comes across us for a moment in opening some smoke-scented volume of Stow or Holinshed—still lingered about the grey church tower and the hamlet nestling round it ; thanks to their sometime vicar, whose harvest-homes and Christmas verses were probably floating in your mind at the very time you were decrying their author. Well, I still think that you and—*pace tanti viri*—Southey, whose hasty judgment I daresay influenced yours, are both in the wrong. Herrick is, in my mind, fully entitled to the reputation he has ; and yet I scarcely wonder that many of his readers should overlook the golden side of his shield, and persist in estimating him by the reverse—I fear we must not call it silver. One cause of this is the arrangement, or rather *no* arrangement, of the poems in his *Hesperides* ; where the

\* *Fraser's Magazine*, January, 1853.



coarsest epigram is perhaps followed by half a dozen graceful verses, full of tender feeling ; or a worthless imitation of Martial or Ovid by a solemn prayer for the success of King Charles. They remind one of some quaint old Roman Catholic procession, in which shaven friars and morris-dancers, saintly relics and frisking dragons, follow each other in the happiest confusion ; and one can hardly be surprised if the reader, who is thus compelled to inspect some of the coarsest and most vulgar lines in the language, should find himself in no mood for appreciating the verses of Herrick's better mind, his 'Prayer to the Daffodils,' or his 'Primroses Wet with Dew.'

However, I am not going to break a lance for him in set form. This letter is intended, in accordance with your own suggestion, to collect such relics of Ben Jonson's pupil (for Herrick was one of the famous 'crew' that gathered about that great master) as still linger in his old haunts, and give something of a classic air to an out-of-the-way Devonshire parish. Moreover, since your visit, the kindness of his successor at Dean has enabled me to examine the ancient parish register, a volume over which one may dream by the hour, beginning in the days of Elizabeth, with the names of 'they that died in the plague' in Dean, and coming down to the glories of Marlborough and Great Anna, when Master Scipio Sturkley was vicar ; a personage, without doubt, of gravity and erudition, who wrote his name in letters two inches long, and made his entries solemnly, in the Latin tongue. But, much as I admired Master Scipio's learning, I found in the book certain very ill-written and worse spelt notices, which I suspect you will agree with me in thinking of higher interest. Many relate to Herrick and his household. You shall have them in their proper places as we go on.

In the matter of family, Herrick could show a tree as ancient and as richly blazoned as any that hung in the halls

of the Devonshire squires who patronized him. The original stock had been early settled in Leicestershire, and asserted their descent from that Eric the Wild, who long held the Marches of Wales against the hawberks of the advancing Conqueror. Toward the middle of the sixteenth century, two brothers of this ancient race settled in London as jewellers and goldsmiths. These were Nicholas and William Herrick, the first of whom was the poet's father. Robert, his fourth son, by Julian, daughter of William Stone, of Segentroe, in Berkshire, was born in 1591; and the register of St. Vedast, Foster Lane, records his baptism on August 24th of that year. In 1592 his father lost his life by a fall from an upper window of his house in Cheapside. He does not seem to have been wealthy, but his numerous family were not uncared for by their uncle, William Herrick, who had been distinguished both by Elizabeth and James, the latter of whom made him his principal jeweller, and on Easter Tuesday, 1605, bestowed on him the honour of knighthood for his skill in piercing a certain great diamond. In 1615, Sir William caused Robert Herrick to be entered at Cambridge as a fellow commoner of St. John's. He remained there three years, and subsequently quitted the University with the degree of M.A. A period of ten years now elapses, during which we have no direct information concerning him; but it is clear, from his *Hesperides*, that he spent the greater part of this time in London, and was admitted to the society of the most eminent wits of the day,—Drayton, Carew, Selden, with Ben Jonson—just now at the height of his reputation—as their president. In his solitary western vicarage, Herrick delighted to return in memory to these days of 'glorious life.'

'Ah, Ben!

Say how or when

Shall we thy guests

Meet at those lyric feasts

Made at the Sun,  
 The Dog, the triple Tun,—  
 Where we such clusters had  
 As made us nobly wild, not mad.  
 And yet each verse of thine  
 Outdid the meat, outdid the frolick wine.'

I cannot ascertain at what time he took orders, but in 1629 he was presented, through the patronage of the Earl of Exeter, to the vicarage of Dean Prior. He was then aged thirty-eight, and seems to have been completely without the means of independent support. But although the certainty thus afforded him must have been welcome enough, we cannot doubt that those were not very pleasant feelings with which he took leave of Jonson and the rest, and set out on his journey into the country, where, to use the words of Luce, in Beaumont's Comedy, 'no old charneco is, nor no anchovies, nor Master such-an-one to meet at the Rose.'

A greater contrast to the gaiety of the capital could scarcely be imagined than he met with in his new parish; where the roads were little better than watercourses or cattle-tracks—where the greater part of what is now corn-field and pasture was still unreclaimed moor and coppice—and where, instead of the *noctes cœnæque Deum*, he could only expect the company of two or three rough Devonshire 'squirelets,' whose study, like Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone's, was confined to a page of Guillym on rainy afternoons. In this respect, however, he found himself better off than he perhaps anticipated. You will not have forgotten the old gabled manor-house I pointed out to you, rising from the midst of tall trees and orchards, with green lines of meadow land sparkling here and there between them. Here lived, when Herrick first came into the west, a certain Sir Edward Giles, who had in his youth 'trailed a pike' in the Low Countries, in the service of Queen Elizabeth of glorious memory, and who had long represented the town of Totnes

in Parliament, 'taking care,' says Prince, 'to give to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, and to the country the things that were the country's.' He was also one of the Deputy-Lieutenants of the county; and his house—the remains of which show how amply it was provided for the open-armed hospitality of those days—was thronged with a succession of visitors. Here, therefore, Herrick found something better than the good fellowship of the Dean franklins; and here it must have been that his 'florid and witty discourse' recommended him, as Anthony Wood tells us it did, to the friendship and especial consideration of the west country dignitaries. It is easy to conceive with how greatly increased a relish they turned over the folios of Drayton or 'rare Ben,' that lay in their hall windows, after listening to Herrick's stories of his London life, and hearing, from one so well able to tell them, how the writers themselves lived, and talked, and dressed. Herrick enjoyed another advantage at Dean Court, however, with which we are more immediately concerned. It was here that he found in perfection all those old ceremonies and customs, for a trace of which we should now for the most part look in vain, even in out-of-the-world Devonshire.

Christmas, with its watching of the pie,\* its carols and

\* This custom, so far as I know, is unnoticed by any one but Herrick. A solitary watcher,—

'Having his eyes still in his ear,  
And a deal of nightly fear,'—

guarded the pie through the night before Christmas. The pie represented the manger of Bethlehem, and its contents the wise men's offerings. The Devonshire 'Christmas play' has had a curious fate. Except perhaps in some of the moorland parishes, it has disappeared at home. But the Newfoundland fisheries were long carried on for the most part by sailors from the neighbourhood of Dartmouth and Tor Bay; and Mr. Jukes tells us that the streets of St. John's, at Christmas-time, continue to exhibit St. George, the Turkish Knight, and all their companions, in full vigour.

its mummers—when Sir Edward's hall was opened to high and low, and

‘ My good dame, she  
Bade all be free,  
And drink to their hearts’ desiring.’

May-day, with its garlands and its hawthorn boughs ; or harvest-home, when the ‘ hock-cart,’ all decked with white linen, bore the last load to the barn through the deepening twilight ; and

‘ Some blesse the cart, some kisse the sheaves,  
Some pranke them up with oaken leaves,  
Some crosse the fill-horse, some with great  
Devotion stroak the home-borne wheat,’

—almost every festival that the year brought round is noticed in the *Hesperides*, and in such a manner as to prove how deeply Herrick had been struck by their old-world poetry. It is worth mentioning, too, that many of the spells, charms, and bits of folk-lore that are scattered through his volumes, are still to be found in his parish, and in a flourishing condition. Even Master Scipio's learning could not altogether put to flight these phantoms of Saxon heathendom.

For eight years Herrick enjoyed all the advantages of Sir Edward Giles's close neighbourhood. In 1634 a remonstrance against the imposition of ship money was sent up to the court, signed by many gentlemen of Devonshire, of whom Sir Edward was one. ‘ Their petition,’ says Mark Garrard, the correspondent of Strafford, ‘ was ill taken, and five of them sent for up, who are come all, except Giles, who is weak, and not able to appear. They have received some reprimand, and so I believe will be dismissed back again ; it being punishment enough to them to have travelled 400 miles to so small purpose.’ Giles's excuse was probably no idle one. He died in December, 1637 ; and his epitaph was supplied by Herrick. His monument still remains in Dean



Church, where he is represented in armour, once richly gilt, with his hands raised in prayer, accompanied by my Lady Giles, in the stateliest of ruffs, and the stiffest of farthing-ales. The inscription below is all but illegible ; and although preserved by Prince, in his *Worthies of Devon*, has never been inserted in any edition of Herrick's poems.

' No trust to metals or to marbles, when  
These have their fate, and wear away as men ;  
Times, titles, trophies, may be lost and spent,  
But virtue rears the eternal monument.  
What more than this can tombs or tombstones pay ?  
But here's the sunset of a tedious day.  
These two asleep are ; I'll but be undrest,  
And so to bed. Pray wish us all good rest.'

Sir Edward died childless ; but Dean Court continued to be inhabited by a family long connected with his own, that of Yarde or At-Yarde. On the 5th of September, 1639, according to the old register, Henry Northleigh and Mistress Lettice Yarde were married at Dean Church. At this marriage of the ' most witty Mistress Lettice,' as he calls her, Herrick contributed the ' Entertainment, or Porch Verse':—

' Welcome ! but yet no entrance till we blesse,  
First you, then you—and both for white succeſse.  
Profane no porch, young man and maid, for fear  
Ye wrong the threshold god that keeps peace here.  
Please him ; and then all good luck will betide  
You, the brisk bridegroom,—you, the dainty bride.'

The ' Good-night, or blessing,' succeeds. It was on their return from church that the bride and bridegroom were received with peculiar ceremony at the porch, carefully decked with ' gilded bays and rosemary ' for the occasion.

Fallen as it is from its high estate, Dean Court still preserves some relics of its old dignity. The greater part has been pulled down. But the hall, with its antlered walls and its wide fire-place, beside which Herrick must often have sat, and portions of the ' great chamber ' above, still remain: and

there is the open porch with its granite seats, where he may have lingered on a summer's evening, whilst Mistress Lettice or Mistress Dorothy touched her lute, and sang his own 'Gather your rosebuds while ye may,' fairly set by Master Lawes. But the true relic of the poet, that which most immediately suggests him to the visitor, is the actual scenery of his parish. Lying on the very skirts of Dartmoor, it is broken into constant waves of hill and valley, so that a breadth of truly level ground is scarcely to be found in it. And throughout, one 'flock' following another in beautiful succession, every coppice and meadow and steep-banked lane is starred from early spring to late autumn with those wild flowers in which Herrick so greatly delighted. There is the little homestead, with the steep orchard rising behind it, where the sun 'glints' through the mossy boughs upon clusters of daffodils and snowdrops, and where, later on, the ground is whitened with fallen blossoms,—

'Lovely leaves, where we  
May read how all things have  
Their end, though ne'er so brave ;  
And after they have shown their pride  
Like you, awhile, they glide  
Into the grave.'

There is the mossy path through the hazel copse, where the March violets first look up,—his

'Maids of honour,  
That doe bring  
In the spring  
And wait upon her.'

And as to his primroses, whose 'birth in tears' even you consent to admire, I cannot hope to convey the smallest idea of their beauty to any one who has not seen their great tufts of flowers in full possession of every bank and hedge throughout the county, until the wild blue hyacinth appears in its turn, and fairly drives them out of the field.

In all this, the more cultivated portion of his district, Herrick, it is clear, greatly delighted, let him say what he will about his 'discontents in Devon.' But there is one poem in the *Hesperides* presenting a singular contrast. Above Dean Court, a long narrow glen passes up into the moors, the upper part of which was at one time enclosed as a deer park. Nothing can be more beautiful than this solitary valley. It gradually narrows from the uplands, sprinkled with fern and rushes, then deepens with steep and lofty 'scaurs,' holly tufted, and broken with patches of grey rock, between which wind narrow green paths, suggesting solemn processions of the 'small people;' then the wood begins to thicken, and you only catch here and there, between the leaves, the sparkle of the stream that runs through it, and look down upon the wood-pigeons' nests in the knotted oak branches; until at last the trees close over all the lower part of the glen, and rise far up along its steep sides. Through the whole length a clear hill-stream brawls, and foams, and dashes—now broken into waterfalls, overhung with holly and deep-growing heather—and now lying in broad dark pools, giving back the gold of the broom, or the scarlet clusters of the mountain ash. This is the Dean Burn, which Herrick thus apostrophises, apparently when about to quit his living:—

'Dear Burn, farewell; I never look to see  
Deane, nor thy warty incivility.  
Thy rocky bottom that doth tear thy streams,  
And make them frantic, even to all extreames  
To my content, I never should behold,  
Were thy streames silver, or thy rocks all gold.  
Rockie thou art; and rockie we discover  
Thy men; and rockie are thy ways all over.  
O men! O manners! now and ever knowne  
To be a rockie generation!  
A people currish—churlish as the seas,  
And rude almost as rudest salvages,

With whom I did, and may re-sojourn, when  
Rocks turn to rivers—rivers turn to men.'

Wordsworth would have looked on the wooded coombes and granite-strewn hill-sides with different eyes ; and Wordsworth would have found something to study in the 'salvages' of Dean, beside their rocky ways and churlish manners. But the days of the *Excursion* were as yet far distant ; and although Herrick loved his violets and his primroses, 'the sleep that is among the lonely hills' had no charms for him. Wordsworth has himself pointed out that the feeling for wild and solitary scenery belongs only to a highly cultivated age.

The vicarage in which Herrick lived has long since disappeared. It was literally a 'cell,' as he himself calls it ; yet it seems that he found room in it for his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Herrick, who, I find from the register, was buried at Dean, April 11, 1643. She is commemorated more than once in his poems :

'First for effusions due unto the dead,  
My solemn vows have here accomplished ;  
Next, how I love thee—that my grief must tell,  
Wherein thou liv'st for ever : Deare, farewell.'

The rest of his household were his maid, Prue, and his spaniel, Tray : and his thanksgiving for his house supplies us with a picture of his condition, part of which you must forgive me for inserting in this place :

'Lord, Thou hast given me a cell  
Wherein to dwell ;  
A little house whose humble roof  
Is weather proof,  
Under the spars of which I lie  
Both soft and dry.  
Where thou, my chamber soft to ward,  
Hast set a guard  
Of harmless thoughts, to watch and keep  
Me while I sleep.  
Low is my porch, as is my fate,  
Both void of state.

And yet the threshold of my door  
 Is worn by the poor,  
 Who hither come and freely get  
 Good words or meat.  
 Like as my parlour, so my hall  
 And kitchen's small ;  
 A little butterie, and therein  
 A little byn ;  
 Some little sticks of thorn or brier  
 Make me a fire,  
 Close by whose living coal I sit  
 And glow like it.  
 Lord ! I confess, too, when I dine,  
 The pulse is thine,  
 And all those other bits that be  
 There placed by Thee—  
 The worts, the purslane, and the mess  
 Of water-cress.  
 Thou mak'st my teeming hen to lay  
 Her eggs each day,  
 Besides my healthful ewes to bear  
 Me twins each year,  
 The while the conduits of my kine  
 Run cream for wine.  
 All these, and better, Thou dost send  
 Me to this end—  
 That I should render, for my part,  
 A thankful heart,  
 Which, fired with incense, I resign  
 As wholly Thine ;  
 But the acceptance,—that must be,  
 My Christ, by Thee !'

There is no discontent or repining here ; but as the times became more troubled, and the troubles affected his part of Devonshire more nearly, his position became a less fortunate one. Dean Court was deserted ; he lost in consequence his only neighbouring friends ; and with them in all probability the originals of those numerous 'mistresses' whom he celebrates in some of his most graceful verses. Who 'stately Julia' was I cannot guess. Perhaps 'the most witty Mistress Lettice' was Corinna :



'I have lost, and lately, these  
 Many dainty mistresses ;  
 Stately Julia, prince of all ;  
 Sappho next, a principal.  
 Smooth Anthea, for a skin  
 White, and heaven-like crystalline  
 Sweet Electra ; and the choice  
 Myrrha, for the lute and voice.  
 Next Corinna, for her wit,  
 And the graceful use of it ;  
 With Perilla. All are gone,  
 Only Herrick's left alone,  
 For to number sorrow by  
 Their departures hence, and die.'

There were other causes, however, for his 'discontents.' In whatever manner he had been received at first, it seems probable that as the country grew more disturbed, his high-church and cavalier spirit gave offence to the puritans of his parish. There are some verses addressed by him to the Bishop of Lincoln, Williams, the great opponent of Laud, upon his imprisonment, which imply that he had been noticed unfavourably by that party. The minor proprietors about Dean were nearly all attached to the side of the Parliament ; and strong puritanical leaven existed among them. Herrick's poems were not published until after he quitted Dean ; but in that age they circulated freely in manuscript ; and it must be allowed that the tone of many of them was not likely to raise him in the opinion of his parishioners. At all events he became more and more dissatisfied :

'More discontents I never had  
 Since I was born than here,  
 Where I have been, and still am sad,  
 In this dull Devonshire.'

At last the end came. In 1648 he shared the fate of the clergy who refused to take the covenant, and was expelled from his living, which fell to the lot of one John Symes, a pious painful preacher.

He at once found his way to London, and in the same

year published his *Hesperides*. Perhaps the best excuse that can be made for much that the volume contains is the fact that he counted on the sale of it as a means of immediate support, and that the general public of those days, like Mrs. Jarley's, 'needed stimulating.' But I must admit at once that there was a natural coarseness in Herrick's mind, which shows itself every now and then even in his very best verses. It has gone far to spoil his fairy poems, notwithstanding their quaint fancifulness; and I cannot but think that any claim of cousinhood advanced by his elfin court would certainly be disregarded by the Dartmoor pixies, or the Scottish 'gude neighbours.' The mass of his amatory poems are not less marked by a thorough vulgarity; and yet a single 'Night piece to Julia' ought to weigh heavily on the other side.

For many years he continued in London, dependent on his friends for support, and we have no means of tracing his course of life. But after the Restoration he returned to Dean Prior, where he died. 'Robert Herrick, Vicker,' says the register, was buried the 15th day of October, 1674. In all his troubles his faithful servant Prue attended him:

'These summer birds did with thy master stay  
The times of warmth, but then they flew away.  
But thou, kind Prue, didst with my fates abide  
As well the winter's as the summer's tide.  
For which thy love, live with thy master here  
Not one, but all the seasons of the year.'

It is pleasant to know that this old friend returned with him to Dean, and lies buried in the same churchyard with her master. She did not long survive him. The register records the burial of 'Prue Balden' on the 7th of January, 1678.

No portrait of Herrick is known to exist. Our only knowledge of his personal appearance is derived from the engraving by Marshal on the title-page of his *Hesperides*

and this is not attractive. The eye alone, large and prominent, seems to mark the poet. He tells us himself, however, that he was 'mop-eyed,' near-sighted, and that he had lost a finger. When the writer of the notice of Herrick, contained in the *Quarterly Review* for August, 1810, visited Dean, there were still some traditions of him among the people. They have now quite disappeared; and we are indebted to that writer for telling us that he is said to have amused himself by teaching a pig to drink from a silver tankard; and that he once, provoked at their inattention, flung his sermon at the heads of his congregation. His beautiful 'Litany to the Holy Spirit' was then, too, remembered; and a certain Dorothy King was in the habit of repeating many of the verses when lying sleepless in the night. The church contains no memorial of him.\* It is said to have been extensively repaired by Sir Edward Giles, who—so runs the tradition—fed and lodged the labourers at Dean Court whilst the work was proceeding. Very recently it has undergone an almost complete rebuilding. But the

\* This was written in 1853. In 1857 a mural tablet was erected in the church of Dean Prior, by the present representative of the Herrick family. This is a very handsome carved stone with raised scrolls, surrounding a brass, on which, below the shield of the Herricks (Argent, fesse vairé, or and gules), is the following inscription:—'In this churchyard lie the remains of Robert Herrick, author of the "*Hesperides*" and other poems; of an ancient family in Leicestershire, and born in the year 1591. He was educated at St. John's College and Trinity Hall, Cambridge; presented to this living by King Charles I., in the year 1629; ejected during the Commonwealth; and reinstated soon after the restoration. He died Vicar of this parish in the year 1674. This tablet was erected to his memory by his kinsman, William Perry Herrick, of Beaumanor Park, Leicestershire, A.D. 1857.

"Our mortal parts may wrapt in searecloths lye :  
Great spirits never with their bodies die."—*Hesperides*.'

Below is the Herrick motto: 'Virtus omnia nobilitat.' For this copy of the inscription I am indebted to the present Vicar of Dean Prior, the Reverend E. Chatterton Orpen.

tower is untouched, and the interior has still an unpretending simple character, well in keeping with the congregation of quiet country folk who regularly assemble there. The old monuments—that of Sir Edward Giles, splendid with its Ionic columns and gilded armour, and one or two later ones, with flames, and cherubs, and torches—were carefully preserved and replaced. Around lies the small green churchyard, with a few old pines in its hedgerow, and overlooked by waving corn-fields from the hill-side above. When Herrick wrote, an enormous yew-tree shadowed nearly the whole enclosure, and brushed the walls of the church. This has long perished. But there is still a youthful descendant, whose ‘branches, never sere,’ may possibly shade the tomb of Herrick, according to the desire expressed in his lines ‘To the Yew and Cypress’ :

‘Both you two have  
Relation to the grave,  
And where  
The funeral trump sounds, you are there.  
I shall be made  
Ere long a fleeting shade ;  
Pray come  
And do some honour to my tomb.’

The actual site of this tomb is unknown ; but surely Dean Prior should not be without some record of her old vicar. *Non ubi nascor, sed ubi pascor*, is Fuller’s rule for distributing his worthies, and Herrick must be contented with the mark of the Devonshire flock. His ‘sometime’ parish may well be proud of having nurtured one who has obtained a lasting—though it may not be a very lofty—place among the illustrious company of British poets.

## IX.

### SKETCHES AND STUDIES FROM BELGIUM.

#### I. MECHLIN.\*

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NO Belgian town has a more thoroughly Old-World look than Mechlin. All the world enters it now from the railway station ; but some fifty years since, when the stranger, journeying with becoming Flemish gravity, approached the town by the old-fashioned *coche d'eau* of the canals, he must have been infinitely more impressed as, entering beneath the Brusselsche Poort, with its steep-roofed turrets, he passed up the long, irregular street to the Grand Place, overhung by the gigantic tower of the cathedral. He would not have seen a building that is not at least a century old, and scarcely one that does not suggest some passage from the troubled history of the town. That house, with arched windows and quaint Gothic tracery spreading over it, must have seen the entrance of Maximillian and his knights, each with a fox's brush dangling at the head of his lance, when he passed through Mechlin on his way to meet his bride, Mary of Burgundy. That other, *den grooten zalm*, with a carved salmon over the door, and elaborate ornaments of early *renaissance* covering its front, must have been built not long before the musqueteers of Alva swept through the streets, and may have looked down upon our own Sir John Norris and all the troubles of the English *furie*. Nothing can be more picturesque than the openings here and there

\* *Fraser's Magazine*, October, 1855.



into the side streets, or the glimpses from the many bridges up the long canals, where gable-ends and crow-steps and half-ruinous towers of red brick mingle in sunshine and deep shadow with patches of old-fashioned garden and clumps of lilac and seringa. Here the sun lights up an overhanging wooden building, with carved monsters for its brackets, and *Les Quatre Fils Aymon* for its sign. Here is another, *In den Christofel*, with the gigantic saint and his pine-tree over the door; and another, with Adam and Eve, the tree of knowledge, and the serpent, carved and painted between the windows; whilst groups of shining brass jugs, such as Teniers or Ostade painted, or the broad leaves of some old-fashioned plant, geranium or white arum, look out from behind the lattices, set in their solemn grey stonework. It is along the banks of the Dyle, running through the town, that you find most traces of the ancient glory of Mechlin—relics of times when kings and emperors were no rare guests in its palaces, and when great Italian dames were content to send to the fair of St. Rumold for a robe of its *panno mesclito*, a mixed cloth which the looms of Bruges and Ypres could not equal. There is a certain corner, too, of the Grand Place where one may dream very pleasantly when the sunset is dying away along the rock-like ledges of the cathedral tower; whilst the picturesque old *halles* below, with their *flandrikan* turrets and steep roofs, and all the quaint outline of the houses that surround the square, are already indistinct in the twilight. *Ketters* have been burnt there, and knights have jousted, and the shadows of days long passed away still seem to fall about the quiet old place. The actual figures that pass, moreover, are sufficiently in harmony. Some old lady, with Antwerp bonnet and long lace lappets, and an enormous gold cross fastening her scarlet kerchief; or another, wrapped in her black Spanish *saya*; or the glancing lights and tinkling bell mark where the Host is being carried back to the

cathedral ; or it is a procession of country people, with the little painted banners of Our Lady of Scherpenheuvel stuck in their hats.

Mechlin is famous for its processions, as becomes the place of an archbishop's see ; and whoever wishes to forget all the stir and interests of this present time, and to pass back again into the heart of the fifteenth century, should betake himself to the grand festival of St. Rumold, when his silver shrine is carried solemnly through the streets, and round by the old walls of the town. The rows of white-robed clergy, intoning a litany as they pass along over the flags and rushes, mixed with white and red rose-leaves and *bluettes* from the corn-fields, that every good housewife hastens from her door to scatter in their way ; the guilds with their *keerse* banners, hung with the emblems of their trades ; the smoke from the swinging censers floating up before the great shrine itself, that goes onward sparkling in the sunshine ; then the cardinal archbishop under his baldachin, his scarlet train upheld, and the amethyst ring on his outstretched finger, blessing the kneeling people ;—all is as little like ‘ this present now ’ as can possibly be desired ; and if before seeing it the spectator cared nothing at all about Mechlin and St. Rumold, most certainly he will afterwards wish to know something of their history.

All that is really known of St. Rumold—to whom the town of Mechlin itself owes its existence—is soon told. Fuller's ‘ all-eating time ’ has indeed left ‘ but a very little morsel of his memory in the dish, for manners' sake.’ He was one of that intrepid band of Anglo-Saxon missionaries, among whom were Willebrord and Boniface, who during the early Carolingian period did so much towards spreading the truths of Christianity among the then fiercely barbarous tribes of central and northern Germany. Toward the end of the eighth century, in the course of his wanderings through

the wild forests from which the district of Brabant\* derives its name, he was received in the villa of a certain Count Ado, who, with his wife Elisa (both are general names, indicating noble birth), was favourably disposed towards the new teaching. Ado granted him a piece of land called the *Ulmetum*, from the quantity of elms growing on it; and here Rumold erected his church and his monastery, the germ of the future Mechlin. He laboured long and successfully, but was at last martyred by the *comites* of Ado, as he was walking alone under the shadow of his elm-trees, meditating the psalms, according to his daily custom. A gigantic tree, at the foot of which he is said to have fallen, was still pointed out in the middle of the last century.

This is all that can be ascertained with even the appearance of truth; but this is by no means all that is to be found in the folio of the Jesuit Sollerius, who has collected with great care and learning all the different lives and legends of St. Rumold,† the ‘Rose-tree of Mechlin.’ The earliest life is by Theodoric, Abbot of St. Trond, near Liège, and dates from the beginning of the twelfth century. He seems to have preserved all the traditions then existing at Mechlin; but by the end of the fourteenth century vast additions had been made: something of the colouring of chivalric romance had been thrown over the earlier story; and all those various buds and blossoms had shot forth from the original stem which may be admired in the series of early pictures decorating the coronal of chapels which encircle the choir of the cathedral.‡

\* *Brak-bant*—the *brake* or forest district.

† *Acta S. Rumoldi*. Antwerp. 1704. Rumoldus is the true name, which becomes Rombaut in Flemish.

‡ Of these pictures, one, the ‘Reception of St. Rumold by the Pope,’ is said to be by Jehan van Eyck. At all events, this and another—the ‘Interview of St. Rumold and St. Gummar’—are well worth careful examination. The earlier portion of the series is most valuable as authority for the costume and architecture of the first half of the fifteenth century.

This later legend asserts that St. Ramold was the son of David, King of Scotland, and of Cecilia, Princess of Sicily, his queen. 'Sidus'—runs the hymn from his office—

Sidus ortum in Scotorum  
Regione nobile,  
Lumen in Brabantinorum  
Terra dat mirabile.

An angel appears to Guallafer, Archbishop of Dublin, and predicts the birth of the child, who practises the severest asceticism from his earliest years. On three days during the week he would only once take the breast—the three days figuring the Trinity—the single number the Unity. He refuses to marry, declines the rule of his father's kingdom, and on Guallafer's death is ordained his successor by the Archbishop of Canterbury; only, as it would seem, for the satisfaction of resigning the pall, which he does at once into the hands of the Pope; and then, habited, as we learn from the cathedral pictures, in a grey robe trimmed with Mechlin lace, yellow gloves, and a purple doctor's cap of Louvain, he sets forth to seek the *solitudo* to which he had been divinely directed. This is Mechlin, where he arrives, and is received as before. He raises Libertus, the son of Ado, who had fallen into the Dyle and had been drowned; and on the Baptist's day two of the workmen engaged in building his church attack and kill him for the sake of his purse, in which however they find only three silver pieces, memorials of the Holy Trinity. They throw his body into the water. A mysterious light shining above it, guides the fishermen to the place. It is raised, and is buried in the church in progress now the cathedral of Mechlin.

To this legend—set forth by Sollerius in quaint old Flemish prose, and in quainter rhyme at the foot of the Van Eyck pictures in the chapels—was of course added a long string of marvels resulting from the many virtues of



St. Rumold's remains. These, after the Northmen had ceased their ravages—and St. Rumold's monastery was more than once plundered by them—were taken from the earth, and placed in a shrine of gold and jewels. From this period pilgrims flocked to them in great numbers, and the reputation of 'Mechlinia Sancta,' as the town began to be called, spread on all sides. The murderers of St. Thomas of Canterbury, says the Flemish legend, immediately on the perpetration of their crime, were struck with loss of taste and of smell. The Pope, to whom they applied for absolution, ordered them to wander throughout the world, never sleeping for two succeeding nights at the same place, until their senses should be restored to them. This they did; and after many years' pilgrimage they arrived at Cologne, where for the first time since the murder they tasted the wine they were drinking. It seemed to them sweeter than honey; and they exclaimed with one voice, 'Oh, blessed Cologne!' From thence they passed on to Mechlin, and as they entered the town, a woman met them carrying a basket of newly baked bread. The knights smelt the new loaves, and cried, 'Oh, holy Mechlin!' The Pope, when he heard what had occurred, heaped benefits on benefits on these two favoured towns; and the three brothers (for such the Mechlin tradition asserts them to have been) built huts for themselves under the shadow of St. Rumold's church, where they died; and on their graves was written:

Rychardus Brito, necnon Norwilius Hugo  
Guilelmus Traci, Reginaldus filius Ursi  
Thomam martyrium subire fecere beatum.

This inscription certainly at one time existed; and it is just possible that the whole legend has arisen from some actual pilgrimage of the knights to the shrine of St. Rumold.\* However this may be, its reputation continued

\* For the real history of the murderers, see Dean Stanley's very inter-



steadily increasing. Wanderers through the solitary wastes about Mechlin found that the evil things haunting them fled before the name of the saint. Cures innumerable were wrought before his relics; and a fox that had carried off a cock belonging to certain nuns under the especial protection of St. Rumold, was compelled to bring back his prey safe and sound, and to lay it reverently at the feet of the abbess. In the contests moreover which Mechlin had to sustain against the Bishops of Liège and the Dukes of Brabant, St. Rumold assisted the good town nobly. On one occasion, when the walls were surrounded by a numerous host, Peter de Dondelaar, a so-called English knight, who had taken service under the Advocate of Mechlin, requested that some holy relic might be given to him before he went forth to the battle. They brought him a rib of St. Rumold, which he fastened into the upper part of his shield; and as it afforded a far more powerful protection than any magical herb or enchanted sword that could be opposed to it, the knight overthrew all he met, and rapidly dispersed the hostile army.

Monseigneur St. Rumold, notwithstanding the assistance he thus gave to the knightly defenders of Mechlin, never became a *gran barone*, such as the Romance writers have made of St. Peter at Rome and St. James at Compostella; but he was a prince and a gentleman, and could consequently prove his sixteen quarterings; and, although he had resigned his heritage of the Scottish crown, he was not the less entitled to display the red lion rampant upon its field of gold. *esting Memorials of Canterbury.* Hoveden says they lay buried before the door of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, with an inscription not unlike the Mechlin one. 'Norwilius,' in this last, is of course intended for 'Morvilius;' and it is worth observing that the names of the knights, Richard le Bret, Hugh de Morville, William Tracy, and Reginald Fitzurse, are correctly given. Sollierius suggests that the tradition of the three brothers arose from a mistranslation of 'Reginaldus filius Ursi.'

Accordingly, in the church pictures, the shield of Scotland appears suspended on a tree above St. Rumold's head, whilst he is engaged in earnest conference with the less distinguished soldier-saint, Gummar of Lierre. It was blazoned, too, on the old cathedral windows, with the addition in the upper half of the shield of three *glebæ* or sods, with three ears of wheat springing from each, in allusion to the agricultural and spiritual benefits brought about by Rumold; and at last the archbishops of Mechlin, beginning with Cardinal Granvelle, thought themselves entitled, as representatives of the Saint, to quarter the royal arms of Scotland with their own and those of Mechlin. It is only the last two or three archbishops who have ceased to bear these quarterings. They appear on the seals of their predecessors, and on their tombs in the cathedral.\*

At a very early period, during that time of confusion which followed the death of Charles the Great, the district of Mechlin passed into the hands of the Bishops of Liège. They appointed, as was then usual, 'Vooghts,' or Advocates, who held under the bishops as feudal vassals, and who were bound to watch over the interests of St. Rumold's church. The vooghts of Mechlin, when we are first able to distinguish them, were the heads of the great house of Berthout, the most powerful family of all Brabant. But such Advocates, wherever they existed, soon displayed a tendency to throw off the feudal relations, and to establish themselves as independent lords of the district. The Berthouts of Mechlin were far too powerful not to succeed in this attempt; and St. Rumold himself assisted them. In 1267 the Bishop of Liège swore by God and by St. Lambert that he would come into the town in spite of all that the citizens and the men of

\* There is an office for St. Rumold in the Aberdeen Breviary. There David is made to rule in Berwick and Guallafer is bishop either of Durham or of Dunblane (*Dunclensis—sive Dunclanensis in Scotiâ*).

Brabant could do to oppose him. He beset Mechlin with a great army. But St. Rumold's shrine was carried round the walls: there was a fierce battle, and the bishop was compelled to withdraw; only, for the sake of his oath, he was allowed to enter, almost unattended, within the gates, and to lay his mailed hand on the wall of the town. The shield (paly, or, and gules,) of the Berthouts still figures as that of Mechlin, with the addition of the Austrian eagle, an especial grant of the Emperor Maximilian.

How the Berthouts, now in fact independent lords of Mechlin, struggled against the increasing power of the Dukes of Brabant; of Grimberghen and the Battle of the Cradle, where the infant Duke, Godofried III., is said to have been slung to the branches of a great oak tree, that his barons might see for whom they were fighting; and how at last the Berthouts yielded, and the Bishops of Liège temporarily resigned to the Dukes their rights over the district of Mechlin,—will be found duly recorded in the old chronicles of Brabant. Meanwhile the town which had risen up about the church and the shrine of St. Rumold steadily increased in importance; and by the beginning of the fourteenth century it was able to compete in wealth and extent of commerce with the neighbouring 'good towns' of Flanders and Brabant. Like them, Mechlin had its wealthy Eastern merchants, who received by way of Ghent and Bruges the dates and figs of Portugal and Granada, leather from Cordova and Tunis, the spiceries and coloured sugars of Alexandria, and silks and cloth of gold from 'Herminie' and 'Thartarie,' mysterious regions which the pious chapmen of Christendom crossed themselves as they named. The *Ambachten*, or guilds of trades, were now in full prosperity; and their guild chambers, each with its high distinguishing tower, rose every here and there above the houses of the burghers. The different trades that assembled in them showed themselves

quite as ready as in other Flemish towns to use the sword and the *goeden dag*, the spiked iron club that formed their principal weapon; so that *Mechlinia bellicosa*, the war-like, figures nearly as often in the rhyming chronicles as *Mechlinia sancta* in the histories of St. Rumold. The two principal guilds were the weavers' and tanners'; and of these the *goede lieden*, or patrician burghers, were members. These, as at Brussels and Louvain, were formed into *Lignages* (*geslachten*), of noble blood, with blazoned shields, and *steens*, or towers of defence.\* Between the *Lignages* and the workmen of the guilds there was the usual contest, ending at last, as in the other towns, in the admission of these last to the magistracy, in the direction of which the burgomaster was supported by six echevins who were artizans, and six of gentle blood. Other and great privileges were gradually obtained by them. The tanners especially, who at last became the most important of all (for Mechlin was early distinguished for the preparation of leather, and especially for the stamped and gilded hangings that under the Spanish rule

\* The 'Lignages' of Brussels were seven in number :—The Race of the Lion, The Race of the Host (*hospitis*), The Sons of Hugh (called also *Clutings*), The Race of Sire Rodolf, They of the Coudenberg, They of the Road, and They of the Red Stream. To one or other of these belonged all the 'wel-geborne' (*divites, fortiores*) of the town. Each lignage had its shield of arms, and its steen, or tower, which could be defended in case of need. They changed much in progress of time; whole families left one lignage for another, and many sank into the class of artizans. The original composition cannot be traced; but although it has been supposed that the lignages of Brussels were actually descended from so many seigneurs, who about A.D. 950 possessed lands and serfs in the territory of the town, it is clear that no merely local fact explains their rise, since similar lignages are found in many Belgian and German cities (Henne et Wauters, *Histoire de Bruxelles*, tom. i.). There was always much jealousy between these lignages of the towns and the noblesse of the open country. In those cases where it was necessary to prove an unblemished descent, as for admission to the Order of the Golden Fleece, the patrician blood of the lignages was not recognised (De Reiffenberg, *Hist. de la Toison d'Or*).

became so famous), enjoyed sundry especial liberties within the town, and had also the right of chase throughout all the lands of the seigneurie, not excepting even red-deer and *sanglier*, a privilege of most unusual distinction when none but *seigneurs et gentilhommes* were free to let their arblast bolts fly within the limits of the merry greenwood.\*

We must not dwell upon the *keures* or charters granted by the Dukes to the Stadt, although they illustrate a somewhat obscure portion of mediæval history, the rise of the great towns and communes. Mechlin became more and more important, notwithstanding that the Dukes of Brabant and the Counts of Flanders (to whom the Bishops of Liège finally sold their rights) constantly disputed the possession of the town and its territory, and that it was exposed to frequent attacks from either side until the two provinces became united under the House of Burgundy. It had also to undergo more than one disaster by flood and by fire. In 1342 half the town was burnt; and, says Master Cornelius Zandfiet, it was at once remarkable and edifying to observe that the fire made curious leaps in its progress, especially attacking and destroying the houses of certain lawyers, usurers, and other wicked people. In spite, however, of this judicious discrimination, it also destroyed the church of St. Rumold, for no part of the present structure is of earlier date. But the new church raised yet higher the reputation of Mechlin and St. Rumold. Pilgrims came to visit the shrine from every part of Christendom; and broad lands and gold crowns of Hainault and Flanders were freely given to assist in restoring it. It had not long been completed, and the gigantic tower was slowly rising into the air, when came the period of Mechlin's greatest glory, heralded, as was fitting, by the *blyde inkomst*, the *joyeuse entrée* of Charles the Bold, the great Duke of Burgundy.

\* Guicciardini, *Description des Pays Bas*.

It was on the 3rd of July, 1467, that the magistracy and nobles of Mechlin, all on horseback, in black velvet (Philip the Good had been dead only a few days), and with gold chains round their necks, met the Duke Charles and his train at Heffen, on the extreme limits of the seigneurie. He rode down to the gate of the town, between nine hundred *béguines*, each with the white Flemish *faillie* on her head, and each carrying a lighted waxen torch. Fifty-two trumpeters, stationed above the gate, when the Duke approached, 'blew,' says the chronicle, 'a right lusty melody, so that men's hearts were blythe to hear it.' The *Pucelle* of Mechlin, for the town had never yet been taken by an enemy's force, then opened her gates and admitted the Duke, who rode to the Stadthouse through streets planted with fir trees, and strewed with water-flags, adorned with triumphal arches and banners, and at intervals by the broad stages, roofed in with branches of trees, of the Stadt's two *Rhetorykkammers*, the Peony and the Lily flower, who entertained the Duke as he passed with elaborate moralities, in which all the Cardinal Virtues figured in company with Sir Hector of Troy and the Duke's namesake, the Emperor Charles the Great.\* Charles placed himself and all his territories under the protection of St. Rumold; and no long time afterwards established in Mechlin the *Grooten Raed*, or Grand Council; a permanent court of appeal which was to overrule the decisions of the various towns, counties, and duchies that made up the sum of the Low Countries. It was held in what is now known as the old *schepenen-huis*, a building with pierced turrets and crow-stepped gables, and a long low hall within it, the beams of which are supported by quaintly carved brackets. Here, seated on a high *setel* covered with cloth of gold, the *IIertog Karel*, with his golden circlet about his head, was wont,

\* David, *Gescheidenis van de Stad en de Heerlykheid van Mechelen*. Leuven, 1854.



during his visits to Mechlin, to give free audience to all comers, every day after dinner, surrounded by all the pomp and display of the most magnificent court in Europe.

But his fierce and ominous figure does not long look out through the 'Egyptian darkness.' Mechlin had formed part of the dowry of his third wife, Margaret of York ; and after Charles had fallen at Nancy, the Lady Margaret entered Mechlin in state, purposing to reside there for the rest of her life. The Stadt gave her a silver-gilt *water-back*, with the arms of the town engraven on it ; and the day after her entry she witnessed the grand procession of St. Rumold from Jan Schoof's house in the corn-market. The cordwainers carried the torches about the shrine, and numerous pageants followed it ; including a representation of the root of Jesse, the great giant Hercules, and the young giant Goliath, the Three Kings, and the Wheel of Fortune. The Duchess of Clarence, daughter of the 'King-maker,' Warwick, visited Margaret in 1478, and was presented with a golden cross by the Stadt ; and after Bosworth many English nobles of the White Rose came to seek the protection of her court. It was in her palace at Mechlin that Margaret received Perkin Warbeck, and gave him her private instructions before despatching him on his expedition to England. But she made a noble amend when she patronized and returned to us Caxton, whose *Boke of Troye*, the first volume printed in English, was undertaken by her command.\* Margaret died in 1503, and was buried in the church of the Celestine Sisters, nearly opposite the cathedral. Her tomb remained there until the Revolution, when it was broken to pieces,

\* Caxton completed his translation at Cologne in 1471, where it was most likely printed the following year. This is the book for which £1060 was given at the far-famed Roxburghe sale. The French *Troye*, printed by Caxton before 1467, is also the earliest printed book in that language. The first book printed in England was Caxton's *Game of Chess*, 1474.

and the church itself became what it now is, the forage dépôt for the adjoining barracks.

The name of Margaret of York, notwithstanding her stately life in the old Stadt, suggests few ideas of repose or prosperity. It is not so with the Margaret who comes after her—the ‘Marguerite des Marguerites’—aunt of Charles V., and the representative of the Low Countries during one of their most brilliant periods. The early life of the future Emperor was almost entirely spent under her guardianship at Mechlin. His father, Philip le Bel, had already been protected there by Margaret of York, during the troubles that followed the death of Mary of Burgundy.

When Charles was born at Ghent in 1499, the town of Mechlin gave new clothing and new shoes to the ‘Jongelinck’ who brought the good news, and set all her bells ringing for joy. Soon afterwards, Philip, with the unhappy Princess Joanna, his *huysvrouwe*, visited Mechlin, with their children, whom they placed under the care of the ‘Vrowe’ Margaret of England. At her death in 1503 they were sent to the Castle of Louvain, under the protection of the Sire de Chièvres—that member of the illustrious house of Croye to whose *grands manières* Charles is said to have been indebted for the gravity, repose, and dignity that so highly pleased the Spaniards. Philip succeeded to the crown of Castile in 1505, and after his death at Burgos in the following year, Charles and his sisters returned to Mechlin, to the palace of Margaret of Austria—daughter of Mary of Burgundy and widow of Philibert of Savoy—the *gente demoiselle* to whom the Emperor Maximilian had entrusted the care of the Low Countries. The Stadt, to which the arrival of great princes was always a costly matter, presented Charles, now six years old, and the two princesses, with a little *caroche* of carved wood, costing, together with the trappings for the horses, four pounds eight shillings. In August of the following

year, a most solemn service for the repose of Philip le Bel, lasting several days, was held in the church of St. Rumold. The Bishop of Utrecht sang mass ; sixteen other bishops and abbots stood round about the altar with mitre and crozier, thirteen knights of the Golden Fleece were daily present, and Charles himself sat in mourning robes on a throne near the altar of the 'Kleermakers.' The church was hung with black cloth and *satyn*, having in the midst the great catafalque, so tall that the top of it was passed through an opening in the roof, with seven hundred torches burning on it, and the king's banners and blazonings floating from its sides. Half a century later, Charles's own funeral service was performed in the same church ; but the great days of Mechlin were then over. Philip II. preferred Brussels, and his bishops and nobles were then assembled about his gloomy figure in the stately choir of St. Gudule's.

Mechlin was the real capital, however, during those fifty years. In 1508, the Emperor Maximilian arrived there in state as the *vooght* or guardian of Charles, who received him in a tent outside the gates ; and Maximilian, seated on a car with a lofty throne, was then drawn into the town by a company of thirteen nobles. The Emperor especially insisted that Charles should be taught the *thyois* or Flemish ;\* and his education had already been entrusted to Adrian Florisson, the future Pope Adrian VI. Charles, however, seems to have loved to fly his hawk along the banks of the Dyle, or to amuse himself with provoking some grand Numidian lion in his iron-barred cage, far better than listening to the counsels of the learned Adrian. The Stadt too was unceasing in the banquets and festivals which it offered to the young Prince and his sisters. On Ascension Day, 1510, a stag was hunted on the market-place for their amusement, the whole area having been

\* De Rieffenberg (notes to Barante) from F. J. Mone, *Recueils pour servir à l'Hist. de l'Allemagne*.

planted with fir trees. Charles saw it from the hostel of the Swan ; and the Stadt gave him and the princesses a *quaert* of Rhenish, the usual *vin d'honneur* on such occasions. The 'Peony' also played divers games before the court, amongst others that of the 'Roosketel,' a sort of water quintain, still well known in Belgium as a *jeu populaire*. At other times the noble 'lignages' of Mechlin held a solemn jousting on the market-place before the Prince ; and in 1514 Charles cleft the 'vogel'—good old Lady Magaret Bellenden's 'popinjay'—at the feast of the great guild of bowmen, and became their king. 'Vrowe Margaritha,' his aunt, was herself no contemptible Maid Marian, and had twice at Brussels struck off the 'vogel' from the top of the Sablon spire.

The processions of St. Rumold throughout this period were conducted with the greatest splendour. That of 1516 was witnessed by Charles, now King of Spain, together with the Emperor Maximilian, the Dukes of Brunswick and Bavaria, and numerous English nobles. Great were the banquetings in the Swan, the Crane, the Bear, and the Lamb—costing the Stadt not a little in spices, *suykerkoeken*, orange flowers, hippocras, and Rhine wine ; and a grand passage of arms was held, in which Charles himself took a part. The August of the following year saw him sail from Zeeland for Spain. There was a solemn mass sung for him in St. Rumold's on the day of his departure ; and the Host was carried in procession through the streets, Margaret of Austria herself following it. \*

She remained in Mechlin ; and notwithstanding the absence of Charles and of many Flemish nobles, the court of Margaret was far from losing any of its brilliancy. During Charles's minority all the threads of the tangled policy of Henry VII., the French Kings, the Pope, and the Emperor, had passed

\* These notices of Charles are from Azevedo, *Eene Korte Kronycke van Mechelen*, a curious compilation from the old records of the town, published at Louvain towards the beginning of the last century.

through her hands. Mechlin was the centre of all. And afterwards her advice and counsels not only assisted the Emperor materially in all his relations with the North of Europe, but she was mainly instrumental in bringing about the famous Peace of Cambray in 1529, which gave a deadly blow to the old commerce of Venice, and for a time added fresh importance to that of the Low Countries. Painters, poets, and musicians from all parts of Europe crowded the halls of Margaret's palace, hung with tapestries of gold and silk, powdered with 'Marguerites,' and with her favourite device, *Fortune In-fortune Fort Une*, or representing *histoires des grands person-nages*, from the designs of Bernard van Orley. There you may recal her graceful figure, as more after the style of Mary of Scotland than the 'high and disposed' dancing of her English rival, she mingles with her court in the *Joyeux de Bruxelles* or *Les Filles à Marier*; or you may see her in robe of black velvet, with long loose sleeves, furred with ermine, wandering through the *bosquets* of her gardens, attended by her greyhound, her marmot, and her parroquet—the *amant vert* of Jean Lemaire, who had early entered the service of Margaret. The parrot had been given to her mother, Mary of Burgundy, by the Archduke Sigismund, and died during one of Margaret's visits to Germany.\* Lemaire, on the Princess's return, laid at her feet his *Triomphe de l'Amant Vert*; in which the parrot, after declaring that his mistress's absence was insupportable, and that he was about to die of grief, entreats that he may be buried

—en quelque lieu joly  
 Bien tapissé de diverse flourettes  
 Où pastoureux devisent d'amourettes,  
 Où les oiseaux jargonment et flageolent,  
 Où papillons bien colouriez vollent,  
 Près d'un ruisseau, ayant l'onde argentine  
 Autour du quel les arbres font courtime.

\* J. J. Altmeyer, *Marguerite d'Autriche, sa Vie et sa Cour.*

To graceful verses like these Margaret many a time listened, surrounded by visitors of greater name than Lemaire. Erasmus was at Mechlin in 1519, and the Stadt presented him with four stoops of Rhenish, a gift no doubt sufficiently to his liking. Albert Durer visited Margaret during his Netherland journey, but had no great reason to be satisfied with his reception ; for although 'Donna Margaretha' showed him her own collection of pictures, she gave no sign of wishing to add to it a single specimen of the great German artist, upon whom Van Orley and the painters attached to her court looked with no small jealousy. It was not so with another, who at this time had taken shelter under Margaret's protection, Christiern II. of Denmark, whose wife was Isabella, sister of Charles V. His stately presence was immortalized by Durer, and the painter was nobly recompensed for his labours. Christiern himself had too much of the scent of the 'fagot' about him, and was far too well disposed to the new doctrines to be allowed to remain long at the court of the orthodox Margaret. His residence was fixed accordingly at Lierre, where he caused sufficient anxiety : but his children, both now and during his long subsequent imprisonment in Denmark, were retained at Mechlin.\*

Margaret's death at Mechlin, in 1530, was felt severely by the Emperor Charles. A most solemn service was performed in St. Rumold's ; after which an oration in praise of the Archduchess was pronounced by one whom she had more than once protected in the course of his wandering life, Cornelius Agrippa, the famous mystic. All the Belgian provinces—but

\* See, for much curious detail relating to this period, Altmeyer, *Hist. des Relations Commerciales des Pays Bas avec le Nord de l'Europe pendant le XVI. Siècle*. During his residence at Lierre, Christiern had the Bible translated into Danish, and printed at Antwerp. Swollen, one of the Danish king's servants, after a public discussion in 1529 with the doctors of Louvain, was seized by Margaret's orders, and burnt on the market-place at Mechlin.



especially the good town she had so long favoured—had indeed cause to regret her. Mechlin during her lifetime had been infinitely improved; and there were few of the great Flemish nobles who did not possess within its walls, palaces whose high towers rose every here and there above their stately terraced gardens. '*Les Malinois*,' says Guicciardini, whose *Description des Pays Bas* was written about this time, '*estoyent fort civils, accostables, et traictables; sentans leur court, laquelle y a résidé longtemps: ayans (oultre ce que nature les pousse à ceste naïve courtoisie) une telle grâce, gentillesse et façon de faire, qu'il semble que toute leur vie ils aient fréquenté les palais des princes.*' The streets too had shared in the improvement of the people. They had been cleansed and partly paved; and *Mechlinia propria* began to take her place by the side of *Mechlinia sancta* and *bellicosa*. The wandering of pigs through the streets was strictly forbidden; 'except the Saints' pigs, wont of old custom to go through them, St. Anthony's, St. Hubert's, St. Cornelius's, St. Rumold's, St. James's, and St. Eloy's; one pig for each Saint.'\* The trade of Mechlin in 'schaarlaken,' † linen, and leather, was still enormous; and it had become so famous for its foundries of bells and cannon, that in 1512 Papenreuther cast here for the King of England twelve pieces of *grosse artillerie*, in 'honour of the twelve Apostles.' The rock-like tower of St. Rumold's, too, 'Babel Chretienne' as it has been called, had by this time risen to its present height, partly by the aid of gifts from pilgrims and nobles, and partly by the contributions of the town itself, every one who frequented the fish market being compelled to give the price of the finest single fish he brought there,

\* Azevedo's *Korte Kronycke*.

† *Schaarlaken*, 'clipped cloth,' the origin of our word *scarlet*, which had at first nothing to do with the colour. The *schaarlaken* were the finest cloths made, hence their reputation. There were 'white scarlets' of Ghent, and 'green scarlets' of Ypres; and the 'red scarlette' of our old ballads belongs to the same family.

toward the completion of the work. The great bell 'Karel,' whose deep voice is heard far and wide across the green lowlands of Brabant, still declares through the old Flemish rhymes inscribed on it that it was raised 'when the eagle trod down the lily flowers' on the field of Pavia. There was a mass and requiem sung in St. Rumold's for the repose of all who fell in that great battle.

In 1540 Charles visited Mechlin for the first time as Emperor. He followed the procession of the Fête Dieu with an enormous waxen torch in his hand, accompanied by the Great Council and all the Echevins. It was a very hot day, and the Emperor, already disabled by gout, stopped the procession before it had made half its usual round. Ten years later, Charles took leave for ever of the good town in which the earliest portion of his life had been spent. In the hall of the 'Groeten Raed,' where his namesake, *Den Stoet*—'The Bold'—had sat crowned before him, he laid aside his authority, and declared his son Philip, who was also present, to be from henceforth 'Heer van Mechelen.'

Philip's presence fell like a blight upon the town. It had reached the height of its prosperity, and now a succession of troubles came upon it one after another. The great *Hostel de la Munition*, stored with powder and artillery, and with all the *appareil* of war, was at Mechlin. It was blown up during a terrific storm of thunder and lightning, and one half the town was destroyed in consequence. When the storm broke out, says the legend, all the town and neighbourhood hastened to ring their bells. At Putte, one of the adjoining villages, the *Marguillier* tried to get to the steeple, but was kept back by supernatural force. 'Are *all* the devils here?' he cried in despair; and a voice came in reply from a tree-top, 'No, no—the others are at Mechlin. I am alone here.' Some time after a company of Friezeland merchants came into Mechlin, and declared that, as they were travelling through

their own country on the night of the storm, they had heard voices above in the air. One said, 'Crom-been' (twisted leg), 'carry off that mill.' 'I am going to Mechlin,' said Crom-been. 'Koort-steert' (short-tail) 'will go down there, and take care of the mill,' and the mill disappeared accordingly.\* The time was indeed approaching when 'the prince that ruffles in that airy region' was to find work for his troops, not in Mechlin alone, but throughout all the Low Countries. In 1561 Mechlin received her first archbishop in the person of the famous Granvelle—the 'little good lord cardinal,' who, as President of the Council at Brussels, had done his best to hasten the troubles now close at hand. The town had hitherto been under the spiritual rule of Cambray; and the appointment of seventeen new bishoprics for the Netherlands, the Archbishop of Mechlin being the primate, was a measure which for many reasons was especially unpopular among the nobles. Granvelle entered the town on horseback, in solemn procession; but not a single representative of the great Flemish houses, or of the *lignages* of Mechlin, followed in his train. He was received by the clergy alone; and the remains of his palace are still pointed out, near the church of St. Peter, in which he is said to have fortified himself with iron doors and heavy oaken bars against any sudden attack of the people. Granvelle's presence, however, did not prevent *ketters* and heretics of all sorts from making their appearance at Mechlin. Once or twice during the Kermis week there were preachings on the road to Lierre, attended so numerously that the placards which denounced the new doctrines were put strictly into force, and many preachers and townsmen who had lapsed into *kettery* were burnt and hung on trees about Mechlin. One especially, Jan Boots, called the 'Spoonbill,'

\* Bishop Hall, in his *Invisible World*, mentions as an instance of the active agency of evil spirits, a great storm which in 1638 damaged the Church of Widdecombe-in-the-Dartmoors, in Devonshire; and refers in a note to this 'prodigious tempeste' at Mechlin.

was looked upon as so great a martyr, that half a century later Lutherans used to come from all parts of Germany to visit the spot in the market-place on which he had been burnt, and to carry away particles of the earth as relics.\* At last came the deaths of Horn and Egmont, and the war broke out in earnest. Steel jack and iron pike became more and more frequent about Mechlin; and the warder on St. Rumold's tower could watch the march of many a *ruyter's* company, as their harness glittered in the sun, along the network of roads stretched out into the far distance, toward Antwerp, or Brussels, or Louvain. There was a small party in Mechlin who favoured the cause of William of Orange; and when, in 1572, his troops had advanced as far as Louvain, they found the means of communicating with him, and of admitting him into Mechlin. *Le Grand Taciturne* remained there some days, to the exceeding cost and charges of the good town; and left a small body of troops to garrison it on his departure. Mechlin was fearfully punished for this visit. Alva himself appeared at its gates no long time after; and although the clergy of St. Rumold's went to meet him with cross and banner, they could not at all succeed in altering his purpose. 'Mechlin's Martyr' was unable or unwilling to protect the town, as in the days when the English knight fought with the rib in his shield; and for three following days it was given up to the pillage of Alva's troops; the Spaniards—those famous *musqueteros* whose weapons, as old Brantôme declares, '*étonnèrent fort les Flamands quand ils les sentirent sonner à leurs oreilles*'—having the precedence. They left so little for the Scottish and German mercenaries who came after, that even the doors and window-frames of the houses were carried off and destroyed by the soldiery. Among the two or three dwellings especially protected was that of Michael Coxie, the painter, now of great age, and one of the boasts of

\* Azevedo.

Mechlin. His works, and particularly a copy of Van Eyck's 'Mystic Lamb' at Ghent, which remained in the Escorial until the wars of Napoleon, had greatly pleased Philip II., and an order had consequently been issued that all honour should be rendered to Coxie.\* A school of painters had arisen in Mechlin before the troubles, who worked in distemper on the large canvasses then beginning to be used in the place of tapestries. Of these, Jan Bol, and Lucas and Martin Valkenborg were the principal. They did not escape so happily as Coxie, and Jan Bol fled literally naked to Antwerp. Another, and one whose name is perhaps more widely known, was scarcely less unfortunate. This was Dodoens or Dodonæus, the botanist, whose studies had for many long years been followed among the broad meadows, the woods, and the wastes of heather that at this time surrounded Mechlin.† He lost everything, and after Alva's departure took his melancholy way to Cologne, where he remained for some years in the service of the Emperor. The wealthiest burghers of Mechlin, not to mention the workmen of the guilds, were thus reduced to the utmost distress, and almost deprived of shelter. Many perished during the winter, as all must have done had it not been for the assistance supplied to them by the towns of Antwerp and Brussels. The 'Spanish fury,' as Alva's plunder of Mechlin was afterwards called, excited so much horror among all parties, that it was one of

\* Coxie had at this time two large palaces at Mechlin. He had returned from Italy with great wealth, and had since been in the highest favour with both Spaniards and Flemings. His best picture now to be seen in his native town is the 'Circumcision,' in the cathedral of St. Rumold.

† Dodoneus was the first to describe botanically the '*Ulex Europæus*'—the golden furze before which Linnæus fell down in admiration. A good figure of the old botanist, with ruff and long beard, has been placed in the conservatory of the public gardens at Mechlin, where it looks out appropriately from between the broad leaves of the bananas and tropical creepers by which it is shaded.

the principal causes which led to his recal in the following year.

But Alva's return to Spain did not secure tranquillity to Mechlin. Among the many changes and chances of the war, the town passed again into the hands of the Orangists, and her greatest pride, the superb shrine of St. Rumold, covered with gold and jewels, was broken up and sent to Antwerp to assist in defraying the cost of new fortifications. The relics of the martyr, including his skull, with the mark of the assassin's knife still visible on it, were scattered over the floor of the church, from which they were collected by two children, who stole into the building at nightfall after the soldiers had left it. Afterwards, Don Juan, the victor of Lepanto, was received into the town, and Mechlin was once more reconciled to Philip, when in 1580 came upon it what is known as the 'English fury'—the taking of Mechlin by Sir John Norris, not the least distinguished of Elizabeth's captains, and leader of the company of English volunteers at this time in the pay of the States. The town had been slowly recovering from the plunder of Alva, when it had to undergo this second calamity. A vigorous defence was made in the streets, and many Franciscan and Carmelite monks were killed, pike in hand, by the English soldiery. Among them was brother Lupus, called the 'Wolf of Mechlin,' whose exertions, together with those of his colleague, Lucius, the 'Light of Brussels,' had long been indefatigable against the cause of the Orangists. Spite of all, however, the town was taken; and Norris remained in it for some time, during which his troops ransacked it to the utmost. The bells and ironwork of the churches and religious houses were broken up and melted; and, according to the historian Van Meteren, hundreds of monumental brasses were taken from the church pavements, and sent off to England. During the whole of those terrible wars, say the local chronicles, not a single



town throughout the Low Countries suffered so greatly as Mechlin.

The town never recovered its former importance. Albert and Isabella were received within it in great state ; and during the whole of the next century it was busied in rebuilding its fallen houses, and repairing its many losses—witness the numerous buildings of this date which lift their quaint gables everywhere along its streets. A new silver-gilt shrine, which it takes eighteen men to carry, was made for the relics of St. Rumold ; Rubens decorated the Church of St. John with the magnificent ‘Adoration of the Kings,’ and the chapel of the Fishmongers’ guild in Nôtre Dame with the well-known ‘Miraculous Draught ;’ and Fayd’herbe, his pupil, built a new church for the *Beguines*, and sculptured many excellent figures for St. Rumold’s. But it was no longer the stately Mechlin of the days of Margaret of Austria. It heard the later Flemish wars, but only at a distance. Marlborough passed through it without resistance, and our armies no doubt swore as terribly in Mechlin as they did elsewhere. After the battle of Fontenoy, Louis XV. honoured the town with a visit, and as the sun was setting ascended to the top of St. Rumold’s tower ; *Sole sub occiduo sol alter exoritur*, says the inscription which still records the great event. Mechlin, too, added another title to the *sancta, bellicosa*, and *propria*, by which she had so far been distinguished.

Lovanium doctis,—gaudet Mechlinia stultis,

runs the old Latin verse ; and *Mechlinia stulta*, *zotte Mechelen*, was so called because once, when the moon was shining brightly on St. Rumold’s tower, the people mistook it for a fire, and hastened with their buckets to put it out. This *maanbluscherey*, ‘moon-quenching’ is to be spoken gently of in Mechlin.\*

\* On one occasion, when a company of players from Brussels were

Such is the story of the old town : no uneventful one over which to dream as you wander beside the full, silent-flowing stream of the Dyle, with its yellow flags and broad-leaved water lilies, such as Hemling or Van Eyck loved to paint, whilst the towers and spires of its many churches rise up against the golden flush of the sunset ; or later, within the aisles of St. Rumold's, when the glimmer from the tall windows 'teaches light to counterfeit a gloom,' and the ray of a solitary lamp falls along the pavement from some distant chapel, or touches the great silver shrine in which the relics of the patron saint repose above the high altar. Then, as the solemn notes of the organ float through the vaulted roofs, the long procession of plumed and scarlet mantled Knights of the Fleece, the plumed figures of Charles of Burgundy, of his namesake the great Emperor, or of Philip, the 'murderer of Spain,' rise once more 'in their habits as they lived,' with all the eventful story of their stormy days. Mechlin is no longer in the midst of the stir and bustle of the world, and her streets are quiet enough now, except on the rare occasions when some old-fashioned Flemish 'cavalcade,' or rarer still, the great jubilee of St. Rumold, recal the glories of her former state. But she has memories and relics for which many a more flourishing town might envy her, and *Mechlinia propria* still holds not the least interesting place among the historical cities of Belgium.

about to perform at Mechlin, it unfortunately happened that the first scene of their play represented a cottage, on the walls of which a broad theatrical moon 'shone with a good grace.' The people of Mechlin declared themselves gravely insulted ; there was a considerable disturbance, during which the benches and ornaments of the theatre were destroyed, and the next day the burgomaster insisted on the players leaving the town.

## SKETCHES AND STUDIES FROM BELGIUM.

### II. LOUVAIN.

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THE origin of Louvain was very different from that of Mechlin. The kernel from which it sprang was the 'Cæsar's Castle,' the few remains of which stretch along the crest of the hill overhanging the town. There, as you look out between the clusters of lilac and apple-blossom, the fine old city lies spread out like a map at your feet, just as in the *Brabantia sacra* of worthy Master Sanderus. The graceful spire of St. Gertrude's, built, says tradition, by the dwarfs, or *kaboutermannekens*; the darker mass of St. Peter's, and the famous *Hôtel de Ville*, with its gilded vanes and turrets and lucarnes, together with the spires and towers of numberless smaller churches, rise like landmarks in the midst of the network of narrow winding streets; whilst the sloping green hills by which the walls are surrounded contrast pleasantly with the ordinary Belgian *plat-pays*. These hills are the first rising ground met with in approaching the interior of the country from the sea, and it was among them that the Northmen, towards the end of the ninth century, formed one of their central stations, into which they gathered all the plunder of the surrounding districts. They wintered here for many succeeding years; and the station at last became so important that it was attacked and taken, in 895, by the Emperor Arnulph of Bavaria, who expelled the Northmen, and thus freed the country from their ravages. The day on which

this victory was gained, in the beginning of September, is recorded by the annalist of Fulda, and it is still commemorated in the *kermesse* and *ommeegang*, or annual procession of Louvain.

On the hill (Loo-ven, the rising in the midst of the marshes) where the Northmen had fixed their stronghold, Arnulph erected the Cæsar's Castle, as a protection against all future invaders. The Chatelains of this frontier 'strength' became the first Dukes of Louvain, and afterwards of Brabant. '*Loven to't ryk hertzog!*' '*Louvain au riche Duc!*' long continued their war-cry, and the city soon began to spread itself out in the broad valley at the foot of the fortress. It had, like the other towns, its patrician *geschlachten*, or *lignages*, the absolute owners of their property, having the right of private war, and serving as chiefs of the Duke's army when an expedition was on foot, and the banner of Louvain, placed on a car drawn by four oxen, called the burghers about it in the market-place. At Louvain, as at Brussels and Augsburg, these *lignages* were seven in number. Charles the Great, whose mighty name shadows so much tradition, was their ancestor according to one genealogy; another declares that they sprang from the seven sons of a certain Bastinus the Tall, who assisted the Emperor Arnulph in expelling the Northmen. Notwithstanding the blazons and fortified towers of the *lignages*, the customary law of Louvain provided that every member on certain occasions should contribute his piece of cloth to the general market. Each in fact belonged to a *metier*; and hence the name of *Wollezaks*, *sacs de laine*, by which they were known among the feudal chiefs of Brabant. The wealth and luxury of Louvain soon became as widely renowned as its cloth, for the *wollezaks* were not less addicted to the 'comforts o' the saut market' than their brother burghers of Brussels, who went to battle, as Froissart tells us, with their varlets behind them, carrying

'bouteilles de vin troussées à leurs selles, et pastez de saumon, de truites, et d'anguilles enveloppées de belles petites touailles.' The *wollezaks*, however, both of Brussels and Louvain, could fight as well as feast; and fierce was the struggle between them and the workmen of the guilds as these last increased in numbers and importance. At the end of the twelfth century the entire population did not exceed six thousand; in 1331 it was at least forty-five thousand, and the cloth of Louvain had become famous all over Europe. At this time Couthereel, himself a member of the *lignages*, gained for the workmen, although not without great difficulty, the right of joining in the administration of the town, a privilege which was nearly at the same time claimed and obtained by them throughout all the 'good towns' of Flanders and Brabant. Fresh troubles however broke out immediately after the death of Couthereel, during which thirteen members of the patrician *lignages* were killed in the Stadt-house, and their bodies thrown from the windows on the pikes of the people below. The Duke visited the town with severe punishment. Many fled to England; and great numbers of the workmen, together with others who, for similar reasons, had been expelled from Brussels and Mechlin, took refuge in the great woods with which the face of the country was then covered, and received accordingly the name of the *sangliers* of Louvain. Wherever they were found, the people were compelled to sound the tocsin, and to hunt them to death; and such was the general dread of them that a reward of 200 gold pieces was set by the Duke on the head of a *sanglier*.\*

Thus Louvain, which had been one of the wealthiest towns of Brabant, became impoverished and almost depopulated. But its best days were yet to come. It is not the *wollezaks*, or the trade guilds, or the *sangliers*, of whom the stranger

\* Piot, *Histoire de Louvain*.

thinks as he passes through the narrow streets. His pilgrimage will be to the remains that tell of the famous old university where, surrounded by solemn portraits and brazen-clasped folios, he may recal the days when grave doctors, furred and violet-hooded, swept by along the shining oaken floors; and learning, or what passed for it, was in reality a 'power.' It was in fact the misfortunes of Louvain that led to its being fixed upon as the place for the establishment of an university. Up to this time the youth of all the Low Countries had been compelled to resort to Paris, where the number of students was enormous; more it had even been said than that of the citizens themselves. There were many disadvantages resulting from this withdrawal of students from their own country; and accordingly in 1425 the Duke of Brabant, John IV., determined to erect an university within the limits of his own dominions. Brussels was at first proposed; but the good burghers, recollecting perhaps the disorders among the 'nations' of Paris, protested against the introduction of so many students within the walls of their town, not in itself the most quiet place in the world.\* Louvain was then fixed upon. The site was pleasant, and the town required some assistance after its recent troubles; and the bull of Pope Martin V. was issued accordingly. For at that time an university could not be created without the intervention of the highest ecclesiastical authority; and Louvain was one, and by far the most renowned, of twenty which were confirmed by the popes in the course of the fifteenth century. There was the more need for the erection of a new place of study, that the University of Prague had recently been extinguished. The Cardinal Brandon de Castillon had come into Brabant in 1421 to preach the crusade against the Hussites, and the Emperor Sigismund was at this very time

\* De Rieffenberg, *Premier Mémoire sur les deux premiers siècles de l'Université de Louvain. Mém. de l'Académie de Bruxelles*, t. v.



laying siege to Prague. Louvain was therefore looked to in order to supply its place, and as a fresh 'propugnaculum' for the defence of the endangered faith.

Great was the ceremony and splendour with which the opening of the new university was celebrated. It took place on the vigil of the Virgin's nativity, 1425—so that, according to the remark of Vernuleius, its historian,\* the university grew with the growth of the blessed Virgin herself. Duke John was present at the opening, together with all the abbots and nobles of Brabant. The constitution was framed on those of Paris, Vienna, and Cologne: the form of government, says Vernuleius, being the tempered monarchy of Aristotle—a *rector magnificus* and a *senatus academicus*, selected from the five faculties, who in their turn ruled the rector. The privileges of an university at this period were very extensive. It was everywhere freed from the civil power, and formed in fact an *imperium in imperio*. Thus at Louvain the Duke of Brabant solemnly resigned his authority into the hands of the rector; and his example was followed by the burgomaster and echevins of the town. The rector accordingly, as far as the university was concerned, ruled supreme; he had his prison, with the power of life and death, 'although,' says the historian of the university, 'he struck rarely with the sword, punishing usually by fines, or in some other manner fitted for the discipline of youth.' More than once the burgomaster of Louvain, having infringed on some of these high privileges, was compelled to kneel at the rector's feet in his shirt, with a waxen torch in his hand, and pray forgiveness. Even Charles V., when, King and Emperor, he visited Louvain in 1545, gave place to the rector. The bedells, with their silver and gold *sceptra*, says Vernuleius, added greatly to the rector's splendour; whilst the red or violet *paludamentum*, with its lining of ermine,

\* *Academia Lovaniensis*, 1627.

that hung from his shoulder, was a mark of princely dignity. Like a Roman dictator's, the office of rector lasted only six months, at first indeed only three, and the election was decided by five doctors of the university, one from each faculty. The university was freed from all taxes and subsidies; and its books could not be taken in pledge. Besides the doctors and students, the printers and booksellers were members of it, and enjoyed its privileges; as were the men and maid servants of its officers, and the widows of doctors and licentiates, so long as they remained unmarried, and did not work for their living.

The university began at once to flourish. Up to this time Paris had been the great centre of attraction. Now the youth of all the neighbouring countries began to flock to Louvain. 'In this pleasant garden,' says the poetical Vernuleius, 'flourish, and spite of all opposition will continue to flourish, the true purple violets of theology, the white lilies of canon law, and those others, dew-spotted, of civil. Here are the red and blushing roses of the leeches, and the dusky hyacinths of mathematical science. As to the sunflower of philosophy, it grows so tall nowhere else.' The old Stadthouse, from the windows of which the members of the *lignages* had been thrown, was at first offered to the university, but the trace of blood on its floors was thought of evil omen; and accordingly *Den Rosen Hoet*, 'The Rose Crown,' a house on the market-place, was purchased by the town, and became the scene of the earliest teaching of the new professors, who were chosen from the most famous existing universities, including Pavia and Bologna, and to whom the town presented as an *honorarium* sundry great *mesures* of Rhine wine and *Vin de Beaune*; a watering from which their respective roses and lilies no doubt greatly profited.\*

Louvain was one of the first universities in which the

\* De Rieffenberg, *Premier Mémoire*.

whole circle of the sciences received equal attention. Paris was almost entirely theological, civil law was the especial study of Bologna, and medicine of Montpellier and Salerno ; but at Louvain there was a *studium generale*, although the violets of theology did not appear there until six years after the establishment of the other faculties of law, medicine, and arts. But after Pope Eugenius IV. had bestowed this crowning grace on the new university, the purple *biretum* or cap, with its border of green or laurel-coloured silk, worn by the theological doctors, soon came to dominate over all the others. A ' Doctor of Louvain ' was a personage of no small dignity. When the candidate, after attaining to this honour, revisited his native town, he was received by his fellow-citizens with solemn festival and procession, some portion of his celebrity being reflected back on them. At Louvain itself, which imitated Paris, the doctor was created with infinite ceremony. The day before his reception he rode through the town, preceded by trumpeters, bedells, and professors, and followed by all the students of his ' faculty,' wearing his chosen colours as scarfs and top-knots. He scattered gifts and money about him as he rode along, provided generally by his native town, which was always required to assist on this occasion. The next day he appeared in the public auditorium. If he was to be a Doctor of Laws—by which ' faculty' all these ceremonies were principally observed—he was presented first with a closed volume, implying that he must keep the dogmas of the law in his heart. Next with an open one—when need is, he must unfold them. Then the cap was put on—green in colour, expressing the ever-flourishing glory of learning—and tall, in token of the aspiration of the candidate toward the eternity of his own reputation. Then the ring was placed on his finger—he was wedded to the law. Then the red gown—a sign of glowing love toward God and man—an emblem considerably neglected by the *gens de robe* of more

recent times. Then the gold chain—he was to be always girded for action ; and finally all the old Doctors received with a kiss of peace the new one, who distributed presents of caps and gloves among the numerous assembly. The Doctor in Theology had to undergo an additional trial. The evening before his reception, the candidate appeared in the hall of Theology among his future brethren, whose wit was then let loose upon him without restraint. All the events of his past life were carefully dug up : and whatever there might be about him ridiculous in manners or in gesture was exposed for the edification of the audience. While thus acting *vice cotis* to these mediæval Punches, the candidate was by no means to exhibit any signs of discomfort or indignation. The whole affair, like the slave in the conqueror's chariot, was to serve as a trial of his patience and an exercise of his humility.

The mass of the university students were of course *Alumni* of the Faculty of Arts, the stepping-stone to all the others. The *veneranda facultas artium* led the way by the study of the trivium and quadrivium, the seven sciences answering to the seven celestial spheres, which the 'universal doctor,' Alan de Insulis, depicts as endowing man at his birth after the fashion of seven powerful fairies. Grammar offered him Donatus, and Logic Boethius ; Rhetoric presented Cicero, and Arithmetic Pythagoras ; Music held the chromatic scale of Milesion ; Geometry conducted Euclid ; and Astronomy pointed to Albumazar. From the *scholæ triviales*, the lesser schools, in which the initiatory trivium was studied, speedily arose the four great colleges or *Pædagogia* of Louvain, under whose wings all the youthful alumni were carefully sheltered. These were the Lily, the Pig (Porcus), the Castle, and the Falcon. 'A most pleasant fragrance,' says the learned Vernuleius, did this Lily diffuse throughout the land.' The Pig, an unhappy name for a theological college, could point

to one pope, Adrian VI., and to sundry bishops and archbishops. From the Castle 'emerged many illustrious warriors for the defence of the right ;' and as to the Falcon, '*omnia supervolat*,' its lofty turret soared high into the air above all the buildings in its quarter. The watch kept over the students within these colleges was far stricter than at Paris, and their general routine of life reads amusingly enough when contrasted with that of the Lilies and Falcons of modern Oxford and Cambridge. The alumni could not leave their colleges except with the permission of one of the rectors. Moderators went round the building at different hours of the day and night ; and the vernacular was on no account to be spoken at any time—an excellent method, as Erasmus afterwards pointed out, for preventing the attainment of anything like pure Latinity. When the students *did* leave the college walls, they were carefully to abstain from dancing in the public streets ; they were not to take apples *in vitis possessoribus*—without the consent of their owners ; and especially they must not assist thieves or robbers, if at any time they should be so unlucky as to fall in with them.

The early teaching in these colleges, and in the university in general, was precisely that of Paris and Oxford at this period, and did not tend greatly to edification ; and when toward the end of the century true learning began to point her lances against the strong places of the 'giant Ignorance,' Louvain, like the French and English universities, took fright at the prospect, and opposed the new order of things to the utmost of her power. 'The better grammarian you become,' said the happily-named Doctor Dullaert to Vives the Valentian, afterwards the tutor of our Queen Mary, 'the worse logician and theologian you will be.' The books which served for the instruction of the youth of Louvain were precisely those which Rabelais has placed in the library of St. Victor, and over which Gargantua himself toiled in his

early days. "Floreta" and "Roseta," they were called,' says Erasmus, 'but when you came to look into the heart of them, you found nothing but thorns and thistles.' The students themselves held them in no great respect, and when a bonfire of the works of Luther was lighted up on the market-place of Louvain, the fresh fuel with which they came hastening to the flames was not always exactly what was expected. One contributed the *Sermones Discipuli*, another the *Tartaretum*, another the *Dormi Secure*, and a fourth the *Paratum*, all Gargantuan compilations, for the absence of which they must have been made to suffer severely enough the next day.\* In fact, Paris, although far from being on an equality in point of learning with the universities of Italy, was at this time, under the encouragement of Francis I., less unfavourably disposed to innovation than Louvain. 'One would have thought,' says Erasmus, 'that Nessenus wished to set the town on fire, when in 1519 he requested permission of the university to lecture publicly on Pomponius Mela;' and when, two years later, Vives of Valentia desired to explain the *Somnium Scipionis*, the rector and his assessors referred him to the faculty which had expressly to do with the 'interpretation of dreams,' a matter gravely handled by the philosophers of those days, who trod in the steps of the sage Albumazar.

The theologians of Louvain in the time of Erasmus were, he tells us, less bigoted than those of Paris.† They were perhaps more independent, for when Henry VIII. applied to

\* De Rieffenberg, *Deuxième Mémoire sur les deux premiers siècles de Louvain. Mém. de l'Acad.*, t. vi.

† 'Theologos Lovanienses candidos et humanos experior. . . . Non est hic minus eruditionis theologicæ quam Parisiis; sed minus sophisticæ minusque supercilii.'—*Op. Erasmi*, iii. p. 666. Passages however of a very different tendency might easily be extracted from the letters of Erasmus; and it is clear that he praised or dispraised the theologians of Louvain according to the feelings or the quarrels of the moment,



its foundation was violently opposed need hardly be mentioned ; but Busleiden was supported not only by Erasmus, but by Martin Dorpius, a person of considerable influence, who had already urged the foundation of a Hebrew chair, and who was one of the very few who actively encouraged the study of the Greek and Latin languages, in which he was himself more than commonly proficient.\* He had also the more powerful protection of Adrian Florissone, afterwards Pope Adrian VI., and at this time Professor of Theology at Louvain. In spite of all opposition, therefore, the college was founded, and it served as a model for the similar foundations of Francis I. at Paris, of Bishop Fox at Oxford, and of Cardinal Ximenes at Alcala. From this time the study of Hebrew continued to flourish at Louvain, and the college was of considerable assistance to Arias Montanus when, under the direction of Philip II., he was completing his famous *Polyglot*, afterwards printed at Antwerp. One of the three copies on vellum was presented by Philip to the university library of Louvain.

The study of Arabic began somewhat later. There were literally no helps for those who first undertook it ; and Clynaerts (Clenardus), whose Greek grammar was long the only one in use throughout the schools of France and Belgium, taught himself the language by a process little less laborious than that by which modern scholars have been deciphering the arrow-headed characters of Nineveh and Persepolis. All these innovations must have been severe shocks to the old-fashioned party, who regarded them as so many steps on the road to heresy. The presence of Erasmus had been a continual irritation. They had found

\* Hallam does injustice to Dorpius when he says, (*Hist. of Lit.* vol. i. chap. iv.) that he 'seems to have been a sworn vassal of the giant Ignorance.' Erasmus has himself left us a very favourable portrait of him. For his assistance in founding the *Trois Langues*, see De Rieffenberg, *Quatrième Mémoire, Mém. de l'Académie*, t. vi.

severe fault with his 'Lutheran stomach,' which could not endure the use of fish even on fast days; and his constant attacks on the *gens cucullata* were well calculated to convert an ultramontane university like Louvain into something closely resembling a hornet's nest. But a severer blow than any struck by Erasmus came from one whose orthodoxy it was more dangerous to question—Adrian Florissone. In the early years of the century he had been the tutor of the future Emperor Charles V., who, with his sisters, resided for a short time in the old castle of Louvain. Charles, however, seems to have attended more willingly to the training of the *Sieur de Chièvres*, to his falconry and *manège*, than to the instructions of the learned professor. '*Adrien me l'a bien dit!*' he is said to have exclaimed long afterwards, when he found some difficulty in replying to a Latin oration. Adrian himself profited more from the connexion. He succeeded to Leo X. in the papacy, to the infinite displeasure of the Italians, by whom his simple habits were regarded as anything but an improvement on the pomp and magnificence of his famous predecessor. Whilst at Louvain, however, he had published some commentaries on the well known *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, in which he maintained the entire fallibility of the Pope, even in matters pertaining to the faith, in complete opposition to the fiercely Roman school by which he was surrounded.\* And the theologians of Louvain were by no means comforted at finding that their pupil and professor did not disavow this judgment after he had himself assumed the tiara.

The Faculties of Law and Medicine can claim no very distinguished names. Some time later, Gabriel Mudæus followed

\* '*Ad secundum principale de facto Gregorii, dico quod, si per ecclesiam Romanam intelligatur pontifex, certum est quod possit errare, etiam in iis quæ tangunt fidem, hæresim per suam determinationem aut decretalem asserendo; plures enim fuerunt pontifices Romani heretici.*'—*Questiones in quartum Sententiarum præsertim circa Sacramenta*, 1516.

in the track of Alciati and Agustino, and laid the foundations for an accurate study of Roman law ; and Vesalius, himself a native of Brussels, was for some time a student at Louvain ; but his great anatomical researches were not prosecuted there, and it may therefore be questioned how far the university is entitled to claim him as one of her distinctions. But by the middle of the sixteenth century Louvain, unwilling as she had been to commence a single improvement of her own accord, had certainly done much for learning. Another great benefit resulting from the university, of especial importance in the troubled times that were commencing, was the tendency to something like national unity, encouraged by the common resort to it of so many students from the scattered and divided provinces of the Low Countries. The sons of the great Flemish nobles, who had hitherto been sent to Paris, were now educated at Louvain ; and it is scarcely possible to overrate the importance of such early association. It was evidently the consciousness of this which induced Philip II. in 1569 to insist that none of his subjects throughout the Netherlands should be educated at any other university. Moreover the *ure, seca* of its doctors was after Philip's own heart. There was very little fear that Lutheranism would creep in among them ; and the king charged Cardinal Granvelle to watch carefully over the university as the very stronghold of the faith in that portion of his dominions. The concentration of Flemish students at Louvain, and the unbending Romanism of its professors, were among the principal—perhaps *the* principal—causes of the eventual check of the Reformation in the Belgic provinces ; for the supposed difference of race between them and their neighbours beyond the Scheldt, by which it has been usually accounted for, is in itself untenable, and is also unsupported by historical fact. It is sufficiently clear that at the commencement of the troubles the whole of modern Belgium—always excepting the Walloon districts—was as fully

prepared to embrace Protestantism, and as earnest in its demonstrations on that side, as any portion of the United Provinces themselves.

Louvain had a difficult part to play during this stormy period. As an onimous sign of the troubles to come, the town was besieged in 1542 by Martin van Rossem, a well-known captain of the day, then in the service of the Duke of Gueldres. Van Rossem was a thorough *condottiere*, who in war time acknowledged *ni loi, ni foi*; and who called a good burning of a town his *magnificat*.\* The university, as soon as Rossem's troops appeared before the gates, took counsel with the burgomaster and the town; and the defence was entrusted to Damian à Goes, a Portuguese knight of some literary renown, who happened to be visiting Louvain at the time, and who proceeded to man the walls with the students. Rossem, after a delay of some days, consented to retire on receiving a certain quantity of wine and beer for his soldiers; but the students laid violent hands on their favourite *Peetermans* and *Faro* as the supplies were being conveyed without the town, and by a lucky chance the Emperor's troops compelled Rossem to withdraw during the ensuing night. There were other enemies however against whom the university could not defend herself so happily. The young Count De Buren, son of William of Orange, had been placed as a student at Louvain, and was still there when his father withdrew into Holland on the approach of Alva. He was at once removed and sent to Madrid;† and Alva's well-known reply to the

\* In fight his hair and beard stiffened, and the blood broke from his lips. The front of his house at Arnhem was painted with *diablotins* and armed soldiers. On his death-bed he ordered a cannon-ball to be placed in his coffin, a specimen of the coarse humour for which he was distinguished, and which made him the delight of his *reîtres*.

† A portrait of the young Count, preserved at Louvain, has been engraved in the sixth volume of the *Mém. de l'Académie de Bruxelles*. His dress as a student is of grey serge or camlet.

complaint of the university on this violation of their privileges has passed from its barbarism into a proverb: *Non curamus privilegios vestros*. As a necessary consequence the Doctors of Louvain, in spite of their goodwill to the general cause, opposed the proceedings of Alva to the utmost of their power; and at last despatched a secret letter to Philip II., in which, after representing the unhappy condition of the country, they entreated him to recal the ferocious Duke, and even threatened him with the Divine vengeance should he refuse to do so.\* Philip was perhaps more disposed to listen to the theologians of Louvain than to his council at Brussels; and from whatever motives they acted, they may claim the merit of having assisted to free the country from the yoke of so intolerable a tyranny. During the wars that followed, Louvain exchanged hands more than once, and was more than once besieged; but neither the town nor university suffered in proportion to other cities of the Netherlands. It seems to have been spared by almost mutual consent.

The accession of Albert and Isabella, the 'Archdukes,' as they were called, marks perhaps the most brilliant period of Louvain. Many abuses which the long troubles had brought about—in discipline and in the administration of the colleges—were remedied by a new charter. Critical learning had made great progress, and Justus Lipsius, then at the height of his reputation, was lecturing in the halls of the university, attended by the tribe of little dogs that always made part of his 'following:' one of which, 'Saphir,' appears in Rubens' picture of the 'Four Philosophers,' now in the Brera at Milan.† When the Archdukes paid their first visit to Louvain

\* A copy of this remarkable letter has recently been discovered at Louvain by M. de Ram, *rector magnificus* of the present university.

† The tulips placed at the back of Lipsius in this picture indicate another of his tastes. But although he loved flowers he hated music



they expressed a wish to hear the famous Professor for themselves, and attended accordingly in the great hall of the Stadthouse, where, as the solemn light struggled through the painted quarrels on his unwonted audience, rustling in all the braveries of velvet, and jewels, and knightly plumes, Lipsius, robed in his scarlet symar, delivered from a raised pulpit an oration on the clemency of princes ; a subject requiring some delicacy of handling, considering the troubles out of which the Low Countries had passed so recently. It must be admitted that Lipsius's best works were produced during his residence as a Protestant at Leyden, and before his final reconciliation with the church of Rome ; but it was a serious loss for Louvain when he died in 1606, during one of those terrible storms of wind then believed to accompany the deaths of distinguished personages, leaving his silver pen to the shrine of the black Virgin of Halle, whose miracles it had laboriously defended, and in whose church it is still preserved. Lipsius is himself the enthusiastic historian of Louvain. *Mœnia conscende et perambula*, he writes, in Latin that has been severely criticised by the Ciceronians. 'Let us mount on the walls and make their circuit.' Nowhere could a site be found more fitting for an university, nowhere one more completely *quietis et solitudinis custos*. The forty-three colleges, besides the four great *Pædagogia*, had by this time nearly all been founded and richly endowed ; and the storks, which the traveller journeying northward met here for the first time, had taken

so greatly that the mere sound of an instrument brought on a fit of the profoundest melancholy. In his treatise on the teaching fitted for a prince, he excludes, or speaks hesitatingly about, all music and poetry ; and rigidly banishes the whole body of romances with Amadis at their head. The house at Isch, between Brussels and Louvain, in which Lipsius was born in 1547, is still pointed out. *Moribus Antiquis* was his device. His religious changes are said to have been : 1. Catholic at Louvain. 2. Lutheran at Jena. 3. Again Catholic at Louvain. 4. Calvinist at Leyden. 5. Finally Catholic at Louvain.



due possession of their crow-steps and gabled roofs, where they clapped their noisy beaks like so many muezzins on their minarets. Without the walls the sloping hills about the town were covered with vineyards, for the wine of Louvain had been high in favour with the old Dukes of Brabant, and fully equalled some of the better growths of France and the Rhine.\* The gilded vanes on the turrets of distant seigneurial châteaux sparkled here and there between the trees; the stately old monasteries of Park and Heverlé lay sleeping in the midst of their green meadows; and beech woods of venerable antiquity still swept away in the direction of Landen and the Hasbaie, the cradle of the great Carolingian race, one of whose daughters, St. Gertrude, was especially revered among the guardian protectors of Louvain. The townspeople had not indeed the courtliness of their Mechlin neighbours. They were *nitidi magis quam splendidi*, says Vernuleius, but they were perhaps all the more fitted for contact with the grave academicians, with whom they seemed to have lived for the most part in great amity. On the occasion of the annual *Ommegang*, when one of those remarkable processions appeared in which the Low Countries have always delighted, and in which Charles the Great and the Virgin Mary, the Emperor Augustus and the car of the Seventeen Provinces, were mingled in a happy confusion, not surpassed by the famous drama of the *Anti-Jacobin*, the university, in full costume, walked between the four ‘serments’ or guilds of

\* The last remains of the vineyards disappeared about the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the monks of St. Gertrude’s, who found they could get cheaper wine from France, sold their presses. The Archduke Charles of Lorraine once dining with these monks, pronounced their wine the best he had ever tasted. It came they said from their French vineyards, and they offered the Archduke a *pièce*. This he would not accept, but consented to receive two or three bottles. The monks had three enormous bottles made, each of which held a *pièce*, a *plaisanterie* which the Prince is said to have found very agreeable.—Piot, *Hist. de Louvain*.

arbalétriers and musqueteers, and the great giant Christopher, the pride of Louvain, whose enormous figure emerged regularly at this season from the *scheurr* or barn which was its especial habitation. The great number of students filled the streets with life and movement. But the university had already assisted in the foundation of two offsets, one of which was destined to grow in importance as Louvain herself declined. These were Douay and Leyden ; the first erected into an university by Philip II. for the especial benefit of his Walloon subjects, the other founded by William of Orange, *le Grand Taciturne*, with entire liberty of conscience and freedom from all the restraints with which Rome and 'the schools' had surrounded the older universities. Louvain sent teachers and professors to both ; but Leyden soon diverged widely from the paths in which they had at first attempted to guide her.

The comparison between the histories of Leyden and Louvain, the results of their teaching, and the great names to which each can point, are subjects which have been debated with no little acrimony by the parties dividing modern Belgium—the *liberales* and the *clericales*. Louvain, say the first, was bound with chains. Leyden enjoyed entire liberty of discussion. No wonder one should have declined as the other advanced in public estimation. To this M. de Ram, *rector magnificus* of the present Catholic University of Louvain, replies in an elaborate essay,\* in which he traces the history of the university at some length, and pronounces that Louvain, throughout the entire period of her existence, had neglected no possible means for the attainment of truth, and had welcomed each new discovery in science with an enlightened eagerness not to be surpassed by that of any 'faculty' of Leyden. But the learned rector attempts to

\* *Considérations sur l'Histoire de l'Université de Louvain.* Bruxelles, 1854.

prove far too much, and reminds us of Cardinal Wiseman's remarkable allusion to the 'starry Galileo and his woes,' as an instance of his church's readiness in the patronage and advancement of learning. Louvain did good and efficient work in her day, but—and is there one of the older universities of which the same may not be said?—her real advance was from the beginning effected in spite, and with the strong opposition, of the main body of the university—a 'progression by antagonism,' which seems however to have ceased altogether in the later period of her history. Whatever the cause, it is certain that during the two last centuries the reputation of Louvain passed completely away, while that of Leyden was increasing daily. It is worth remarking that the two names by which Louvain is best known—Erasmus and Justus Lipsius—are both those of persons regarded during their lifetime with something more than suspicion by the extreme Roman party—the true representatives of the university. Nor indeed with these exceptions can Louvain point to any series of names which have become greatly distinguished beyond the limits of their own country. Still it is quite certain that such names are far from being the main tests of the general efficiency of any university; and we may fairly admit that Louvain has sound claims to be regarded with respect and reverence by the country whose destinies she has considerably influenced, and into which, whether willingly or not, she was certainly the means of introducing much true and accurate learning.

M. de Ram insists that, even throughout the eighteenth century, when scientific research was but very little patronized within the walls of universities, whether at Louvain or elsewhere, every new discovery was welcomed by its professors, and received all the attention to which it was justly entitled. They did not exclude even Franklin's theory of electricity, 'notwithstanding the repugnance fairly excited by the political and philosophical notions of its author.' But if they welcomed

Franklin, there were some great names that continued strangers at Louvain. The ancient teaching of 'Aristotle and his philosophie' was still the great standard. Galileo, Bacon, and Newton, were all but unheard of. No wonder therefore that the very name of the university should have been nearly forgotten. It attracted somewhat more attention toward the end of the century, during the stormy scenes of the Brabançon revolution, a little known but very curious passage of modern history. From 1780, when the Emperor Joseph II. succeeded the Empress Queen, to the end of 1790, when the Imperial troops entered Brussels as conquerors, nearly all Belgium was in a state of revolt, the insurrection being headed by the nobles and clergy. The Emperor's success was indeed but shortlived, for the French crossed the frontier in 1792, and in 1795 Belgium was formally added to the *grande République*. Louvain had been one of the great causes of the Belgian discontent. The *séminaire générale* which Joseph II. attempted to establish there, after the fashion of others at Vienna and Pavia, in which a regular course of theology was to be taught, including the study of Greek and Hebrew, was violently opposed by the clergy and university professors. It seemed as if a blow was intended to be struck at the fierce ultramontanism of Louvain, for it was proposed that none should be admitted to holy orders who had not profited by the lectures of the *séminaire*. The discontent was great, but the lectures were at first tolerably attended, although the Bishop of Limerick, scenting, like a true Irishman, the battle from afar, declared he would admit to orders none of his 'clerks' who during their studies at Louvain had listened to the teaching of the insidious *séminaire*. But the quiet did not last long. Troubles soon arose, under the judicious guidance of the more orthodox professors; and an attack was made on the *séminaire* by the students, who broke the glass and burnt the benches, threw the tables out of the window, and turned the Superior out of doors. A detachment

if emissaries sent from Brussels succeeded in restoring order, and the students, as their next best step, despatched a humble petition to the Government, in which they pointed out the extreme necessity of such studies as Greek and Hebrew, and also took occasion to represent that the beer of Louvain was not supplied to them in sufficient quantities. Every abbey, every convent they said, was better off in this respect; and what was life at Louvain without beer? The *séminaire* continued to exist, but thanks to this petition, and to the shillelaghs of the Irish 'merits' it did very little real mischief, and up to the last moment of its existence the university pursued its old tranquil course, teaching, with a resolution worthy of a better cause, to move round the sun, and altogether ignoring the heretical apples that dropped from their trees in Sir Isaac Newton's garden.

Louvain, however, when her last hour came, 'composed her mantle' and fell with dignity. When, in 1795, the church of St. Gertrude, with all its delicate wood carvings, was converted into a 'Temple of Reason,' the university, although perfectly aware of what the result would be, steadily refused to assist at its festivals. 'If we must fall,' they said, 'let it be in support of our holy faith, *pro moribus antiquis—piis—Christianis*.' So it was accordingly. The Republic, finding it impossible to bend the university to its wishes, dissolved it by a solemn decree, and two years later the ancient University of Louvain had already ceased to exist. The annual value of the revenues at this time confiscated is estimated by De Pradt at 1,400,000 francs.

The present university was established in 1816, and reconstituted after the revolution of 1830. It is exclusively Romanist, and accepts as a glory, and not a reproof, the charges of ultramontanism and illiberality. We believe, however, that it has consented to move round the sun.

## SKETCHES AND STUDIES FROM BELGIUM.

### III. BRUGES FROM THE BELFRY TOWER.\*

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GREAT is the excitement to-day in this old town of Bruges, usually so still and quiet. Streams of visitors, from every *bonne ville* within accessible distance,—Courtray, Ypres, Ghent, Oudenarde—come pouring through the streets, which are planted with young fir-trees and decorated with all manner of streaming flags and pennons. Baskets of rushes and golden broom stand at every door; and all the best *salons* are set wide open for the reception of expected guests. Strange caps from Blankenburg and the Dutch border, with stranger cloaks and bonnets from outlying villages of the ‘Frank,’ are mingled with bare-footed Carmelites, Capuchins with long red beards, black plumed Carbineers, and Beguines with the whitest and stiffest of headgear. Sister Katryn and Sister Gertrude, with their *failles* and black robes and rosaries, have just been received with the utmost respect in that pink-stained house opposite, where the ‘Seven Works of Mercy’ are carved along the front. There they sit at the broad open window, looking down upon the moving crowd, just like an illumination cut out of the *Boke of Troy* or the *Romaunt of the Rose*. Great is the chatter in all sorts of Flemish, under the lindens of the cathedral, from whence every now and then an organ note comes floating through the branches. Now the crowd falls reverently back, and the priests of St. Anne or St.

\* *Fraser's Magazine*, January, 1857.



Jacques, in their richest copes, with choristers, crosses, and banners, pass along toward the Grand Place. Now it opens again, and there steals by a long string of 'Maries' in white veils and chaplets, bearing branches of lilies in their hands. It is the great fête day of Bruges—the only day in the year when the town regains something of its old life and movement. The 'Saint Sang,' brought from the Holy Land in the twelfth century, by Count Thierry of Alsace, the most precious of all the myriad relics honoured in the churches of Belgium,—will shortly emerge in its jewelled shrine from its chapel under the shelter of the Stadhuys, and will be carried in solemn procession through the streets, attended by all the clergy, and by representatives of the numberless religious orders which, as the Brugeois will tell you, make the town one great convent when its gates are shut at night. Bruges itself, and all the fields about it, are to draw their prosperity throughout the coming year from this grand occasion : and every peasant who cares for his flax or potatoes will follow in the train of the shrine. With permission, however, we will ourselves choose to-day the more picturesque part. A true old-world ceremony, such as these Flemish processions—*mystères du moyen âge*—as Dumas has called them—*qu'on vient voir par les chemins de fer*, is, like an eastern town, never more striking than when viewed from some judicious distance, whence its anomalies and imperfections may all be softened down so as to afford us the general and impressive effect, without its discords. Following Mr. Longfellow's example, we will climb the old tower of the belfry,—the tower of the Halles, that watches over the Grand Place, and that shows its graceful pinnacles and broad black window arches, wherever a glimpse of the town is caught through the trees of the *plat-pays* about it.

Great, indeed, is the contrast, as we pass into the quiet gloom of the tower, from the stir and sunshine of the warm

spring day without. Mount carefully its winding stair—story after story—glancing, if you will, into that vaulted room, grim and spider-haunted, where the records of ancient Bruges, memorials of the Konings and the Artevelde, were long left to moulder,—or lingering for a moment at the narrow arch opening to the chamber where the largest bell is hung, across which a ray of mottled sunshine falls through the tall window-slit. Here we are at last in the room where the Carillonneur is preparing to contribute his part to the day's festivities. The space is nearly all taken up with the great tambour of the Carillon—like that of a gigantic musical-box—and with the clavier on which the performer strikes the notes. Even here we must not linger now. Still higher—and at last we are safe in the story directly under the roof, with high-arched, unglazed windows opening on all sides, like so many dark frames, each enclosing a broad sunlighted picture.

Far and wide, in every direction, stretches the green, rich country, like some vast landscape of Rubens or of Turner, surrounding with its belt of verdure the many-gabled old town at our feet. Over all hangs the great arch of the sky, deep blue above, but paling off toward the distant horizon. One or two light clouds are floating in it, and chequer with their shadows the 'yonge freshe grene' of the lindens and beech woods. Canals gleam here and there between the fields of rye and of flax,—green that rivals in loveliness the unfolding leaves of the lime trees. The smoke of the trains rises white in the sun over the tree tops. Groups of poplars shoot up like beacon flames above the deep masses of leafage. Old Châteaux,—Tillegheem, with its gilt vanes, and its tourelles,—Mâle, the stronghold of the Counts of Flanders,—lie half asleep in the midst of their own woods; and westward, between the grey line of the dunes, the blue of the sea breaks in at intervals. All is set in the black framing of the windows, and sometimes a starling or a jackdaw comes flashing across

in the sun, and prunes himself on the top of the pinnacle just visible below. Within, we are in deep shadow, under the huge cross-beams of the roof, on one of which hangs the brand-horn—like an ancient trumpet—to be sounded whenever fire shall break out. Leaning over the broad sill of the window, we can now see all that is going on in the town below us.

It lies unfolded like a map. Every house and every square is visible ; and though no Asmodeus is at hand to sweep away the roofs, we nevertheless seem admitted to all sorts of private haunts and seclusions. Each street is marked out, with its crow-stepped gables and red tilings. There—occupying the very sites where first St. Eligius, and then St. Boniface, had preached to the fierce old Flemings—rises the tower of the Cathedral; and there Nôtre Dame, massive, dark, fortress-like, telling in its gloomy strength its own wild story of thirteenth century troubles. The convent gardens lie all open to us, with their trees and their clumps of flowering azaleas ; patches of bright colour between the grey old walls. There are the lindens of the Stevens-Platz and the Bourg. There open the narrow market-squares, where the banners of the trade guilds have so often floated over stormy debate and over stormier strife. There is the street of St. Amand, where the Count of Flanders took shelter in the widow's loft on the memorable night of Artevelde's attack ; and farther off, close within the line of the walls, glimmers the ' Minnewater,' where the men of Ghent have many a time exchanged blows with their never-reconciled rivals of Bruges. Look now at that long open space beginning under the shadow of Nôtre Dame, and stretching as far as the picturesque gables of the palace of the Frank. That is the quay of Rosenhoet, the most thronged of the many canal quays of Bruges in those golden days when the commerce of the Flemings extended as far as that of the Phœnicians of old, and when the great fair of Bruges brought together merchants and chapmen from almost



every part of Christendom. At its upper end, close by the church, is the stately old mansion of Gruyt'huys, in which Edward IV. was sheltered for some months, when he fled from the recovered power of the Red Rose. Further on, in a quarter of low-roofed houses still preserving a fragment of the mediæval town, rises the dome of the Church of Jerusalem—an imitation of the Holy Sepulchre, and one of those many buildings which were raised in different parts of the north as memorials of the 'Holy Places' after they had again fallen into the hands of the Saracens. It is itself the work of the Adornis, a great house of Genoese merchants, early settled in Bruges. Nearer at hand is the carved front of the Genoese exchange, the first 'Bourse,' it is said, which was ever established in Europe. Beyond, again, over streets crowded with relics of ancient splendour, fragments of merchant palaces, and of the trade halls with their towers,—rises the high *tourelle* of moulded bricks belonging to the guild of St. Sebastian, the earliest of all the guilds of archers and *arbalétriers*, once the pride of every Flemish town. In its long garden gallery, open at the sides like a Kentish church-porch, Charles the Second, during his exile here, used frequently to 'shoot at the butts;' and no doubt drained many a tall glass of claret in the great room within, where his statue, decorated with certain edifying Flemish rhymes, still occupies the place of honour. Not a quarter of the old town but has its own interest, or that does not suggest visions of plumes and cloth of gold, Ambacht's men, with white hoods and 'goeden dags'—those iron-spiked staves that gave such effectual 'good mornings' on the field of spurs at Courtray,—or sweeping processions of Knights of the Fleece and the 'lances of Burgundy.' Yet perhaps the most interesting relic of ancient Bruges lies close below us. That slender pinnacle, with its dome-like crest of open work, rising above the end of the *Saint Sang* chapel, is nearly all that now exists of the 'Bourg' or Castle of t

Counts of Flanders. Romanesque in character, it is at least as old as the Norman Conquest. Earl Godwine may have looked on it when he took refuge in Bruges on his banishment from England; and it may have been familiar to Gytha and her daughters, when they too, after Hastings, fled from Exeter, and found shelter within the castle of Count Baldwin. The graceful old Stadhuys, with the gilt angels glittering on its *lucarnes*, lies beside it—the most ancient Hotel de Ville in all the Low Countries. And here, in front, opens the Grand Place, encircled by quaint and many-coloured houses; among them the tall front and pointed arches of the Craenenburg, in which Maximilian was confined, whilst the shouts of the ferocious *Clawaerts* were ringing in his ears, and the axe fell, and the fire streamed up from the scaffolds of his friends, whose lives were closing fearfully in the square below.

Meanwhile the procession has been creeping slowly through the streets strewed with flowering broom and water-flags, and at last emerges into the sunshine of the Grand Place. The clang of military music mingles strangely with the Litanies. Mounted lancers come first, and take up their position beside a great altar raised on the opposite side of the square. It is blazing with gold and jewels; its many steps are carpeted, and strewn with 'herbs of grace'—mint, and thyme, and balm of Gilead. Chanting choristers, in their crimped albs, pass by, and range themselves on either side of the altar steps. Then the smoke floats upward from a dozen swinging censers, and the perfume of the frankincense rises through the clear air even to the top of our lofty tower. Monseigneur de Bruges follows, under his scarlet canopy, bearing the *Saint Sacrement* in its glittering monstrance. Behind him come the Bishops of Liège, of Ghent, and of Arras, each walking with his tall crozier, and shining in the sun, with their rich copes and mitres, like so many golden beetles. The shrine of the *Saint*

*Sang*, and its companion, the figure of the Saviour, brought from the tomb in the Church of Jerusalem, and covered with a veil, then appear, surrounded by Capuchins and Carmelites. Long strings of monks and nuns creep across the square; Maries with their lilies, and a little St. John in a sheepskin, leading a lamb by a long blue riband. The priests of Bruges, and of all the communes round about, follow; and through all the ranks glitter crosses and banners, and jewelled crowns on the heads of numberless figures of the Virgin. All round the great square the long lines range themselves. All are quiet except St. John's lamb, which gives considerable trouble, bleats once or twice, and is only stilled at last by its master sitting upon it. The bishops and priests are at the altar; the office commences; the responses roll upward grandly; and very solemn is the moment when, at the elevation of the Host, the trumpets sound a fanfare, a hundred choristers break into the *Ave verum*, and the great bell within the tower tolls out deeply over all the kneeling people.

At last the service is over. All defile slowly off into the Bourg-Platz, where the holy relic is once more placed in the chapel, not to emerge again for another twelve-months. When closely inspected—which it may be by passing before it any Friday morning, when it is exposed for the veneration of all comers—it resembles a patch of worsted, dyed of a dull-red colour. So must have looked the Holy Blood of Hailes, before Cromwell's commissioners ventured to break the glass in which it was exhibited; and so still looks the famous blood of St. Januarius at Naples. In the most prosperous days of Bruges, the procession of the *Saint Sang* was the signal for the display of the greatest riches that the town possessed, and for the invention of the most wonderful ceremonies and miracle plays. It heralded the great fair, to which came the merchants of Christendom, some in their ships to the ports of Damme, and some with long strings of pack-horses through the dangerous



forests of Flanders. The fair of Bruges still follows the procession ; but if we wish to see with our own eyes what the ancient fair resembled, we must now journey eastward as far as Novogorod. Two points connected with it, however, we may yet make out, as we gaze once more over the wide landscape ;—the source from which the commerce of Bruges originally sprang, and that from which it continued to be supported during its existence. The first is Thorout, lying away toward the horizon, southward among the remains of its great oak woods ; the second is the old port of Damme—now no port at all, but a cluster of grey, lonely houses by the side of its long canal—‘ *veritable image d’un ennui sans bornes,*’ says some one, which is true only of a dark wintry day, and not when, as now, the young leaves are unfolding themselves and the blue water is rippling in the sunshine.

Thorout—Thor’s holt—the wood of Thor—seems to have been the great religious centre for the heathen Flemings of the coast. Until within the last few years, during which the wood has been slowly clearing, many rude stone monuments existed in it, under oaks whose branches shadowed the walls of Winendale, one of the most favourite castles of the Counts of Flanders. Here, as to the very stronghold of Paganism, came the first Christian preachers ; bearding the lion in his den, and succeeding at last in raising a church and a convent in the midst of the circles and green mounds of Thor and of Odin. Tournay, the Frankish capital, was the centre from which Christianity first invaded the woods and marshes of ‘ Fleanderland ;’ as Arras, another Roman frontier town, was that from which it penetrated into Brabant and the Ardennes. It was St. Medard, bishop of Tournay, toward the beginning of the sixth century, who first appeared as a missionary among the Flemings of Thorout ; and in his anonymous but almost contemporary life, the word Flanders—*gens Flandrensium*\*

\* The etymology of this word is doubtful. ‘Any that we can guess

occurs for the first time. Fierce heathens, indeed, in all but name, they continued long centuries after this; yet a commune near Thorout is still known as St. Medard's; and the cell which he had founded still remained in the ninth century, when it was given by the Emperor Louis the Pious to St. Anschar, the 'Apostle of the North.' Here, as Anschar was one day standing at the door of the little church in the midst of the oak clearings, there passed by a yellow-haired Flemish boy, with whose appearance he was greatly struck. It was Rembert, destined to be his companion during his labours in Denmark and in Sweden, to be the historian of his life, and finally to become his successor in the archiepiscopal see of Hamburgh.\*

Thus the fifteen years' labour of Medard among the ferocious Flemings was not altogether without its fruit; and thus the Flemings in their turn—for besides Rembert, Anschar himself is said to have been of their race—came to take part in the work of spreading the great truths of Christianity. Centres of religion, however, have always been centres of commerce; and to this rule Thorout was no exception. The first great Flemish fair grew up here under the walls of the cell of St. Anschar. In earlier times, the wool and the corn of Britain and the West had found their way to Trèves, the storehouse of Northern Europe,

Imperii vires quod alit, quod vestit, et armat,

or to Arras, which retained for a longer period its great commercial importance. Both were to give place to a site in every way more fitted to become the staple of northern trade. After Baldwin Bras-de-fer, the first Count at,' says Sir F. Palgrave, 'seems intended to designate that the land was so called from being half drowned' (*Normandy and England*, i. 537). M. Kervyn de Lettenhove (*Hist. de Flandre*, i. 52) suggests *Fleondra land—pays des fugitifs—Flymings*. This is so far questionable that it is not likely to have been accepted by the Flemings themselves.

\* V. S. Remberti, ap. Langebek et Suhm.

of Flanders, had married Judith of France, widow of the Saxon Ethelbert, and mother-in-law of our Alfred the Great, he fixed his principal residence at Bruges, and built a strong castle there (the 'Bourg' at our feet), at a place which already had become well known from the bridges (brugge) which there crossed the winding stream of the Reye. Within the walls was a chapel, in which were placed the relics of St. Donatus, brought from Rheims, who from this time became the patron saint of Bruges; and outside the gates were the Mal-berg, the 'hill of council,'—like the 'mytstedes' still existing in Friesland, and the green mote-hills of Galloway—and a rude hostelry for the chapmen during the fair, which Baldwin transferred from Thorout to his new and more convenient abode.

Thus arose Bruges: and now we may look westward toward Damme, its ancient port and the main source of its prosperity. Among all the changes which this coast has undergone, none has produced more important or more lasting results than the drying up of the Zwyn, the arm of the sea that formerly penetrated in a south-easterly direction from the coast near l'Ecluse, to a little beyond Damme, within two English miles of Bruges. The Zwyn, or the 'Sincfala,' as it is called in the earliest Frison laws, was the recognised boundary between that race and the Flemings farther south. In early times its navigation was safer than that of the Scheldt, crowded with small islands, many of which have changed their forms or entirely disappeared; and the line of the sea-dunes acting as a break-water, converted it into a long harbour, well known to the northern Vikingr, whose ravages, it is not impossible, had partly induced Baldwin to fix his new castle at Bruges. Soon, however, as the town increased under the castle walls, and the fair grew in importance, more peaceful ships began to haunt the shallow waters of the Zwyn. There was brought the wool from the green meadows and uplands of the English

Cistercians ; there, later still, came the rich galleys of Genoa and of Venice, Osterling ships from the Hanse towns, and others from the remoter shores of Norway and Sweden. All the treasures of the north and south were collected there, and poured onward to the great mart of Bruges ; gerfalcons from Iceland, and the oils of Andalusia ; Russian furs, and dates from the Atlas ; the metals of Hungary and Bohemia ; figs from Grenada ; honey of Portugal ; leather from Morocco, and the spices of Egypt ; '*par coi,*' says an old chronicler, '*nulle terre n'est comparée de marchandise encontre la terre de Flandre.*'\* At the head of the inlet rose at last the town of Damme, called 'Honds-Damme,' the dyke of the dog, from a story that its foundations perpetually sank until a black hound, breathing fire, appeared on the edge of the morass in which they were laid, ran several times round it, and then vanished in the midst, after which the ground became firm and solid. Many a tale of ancient splendour, and many an illustration of European history, might be furnished by the ruins of the old church at Damme, could they find a voice to declare all the changes they have witnessed, and to tell of all the great personages who have passed through their aisles and beneath their arches. Like Sandwich, on the opposite coast, the harbour of Damme is now a line of rushy marshes and green 'polders ;' yet beside its walls the lilies of Philip Augustus have waved ; and the leopard flag of the Plantagenets has many a time fluttered there in days when the desire of French conquest led the kings of England to make common cause with the half-despised 'weaver nobles' of Flanders. To Damme, with the third Edward, came 'Madame Philippe la Royne,' passing through Bruges, and so on to Ghent, where she gave birth to her son John of Gaunt ; and where she held at the font, and

\* Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Hist. de Flandre*, ii, p. 12. This is the best general history of Flanders, though it by no means supersedes the more profound work of Warnkœnig.

bestowed her own name upon, the infant son of Jacques van Artevelde, that Philip who was to tread in the footsteps of his greater father. In the church of Damme, now open to the sky, yet still showing in its arcades and traceries thirteenth century work of much beauty, was celebrated the marriage of Charles the Bold with Margaret of York, a solemnity followed by such maskings, triumphs, and 'sotelties,' as had never yet been seen, even in the spectacle-loving town of Bruges. By this time, however, the Zwyn was beginning to show signs of disappearing. Even the shallow vessels, which alone could approach the coast of the Netherlands, found difficulty in passing up it. The sea retired more and more. Broader and broader polders were enclosed on either side of the strait; and at last it became altogether impracticable. From that moment the trade of Bruges—which had already suffered in consequence of the increasing cloth traffic of England—ceased altogether. The Low Country commerce passed to Antwerp; and thence, after the troubles of Alva, again northward, to Amsterdam. Yet Damme, as the first trade harbour on this coast, is still worthy of a pilgrimage. There is a strange deserted look about the old place, all the more impressive from the remains of its past grandeur. The turf smoke, curling up over the carved front and ruinous towers of the Stadhouse, and the old *curé* sunning himself under the apricots of his garden wall, are nearly all the out-of-doors signs of life you are likely to encounter. But enter the Stadhouse, now degraded into the hostelry of the White Swan, and inspect a so-called portrait of Van Maerlant, the old Flemish Chaucer, carved on one of the panels in the great *salle*. Scroll in hand, he is supposed to be inditing the marvellous adventures of *Till Eulenspiegel*, to the honour of whose birth Damme, among many other places, has put forth her claims. His tombstone, decorated with an owl and a mirror, was formerly pointed out on the nave flooring of the ruined church.



The green, rich, village-dotted country in the midst of which Damme lies, is the ancient Frank of Bruges, one of the four 'members' of Flanders—Ghent, Ypres, and the town of Bruges being the other three. The palace of the Frank, within which is Blondeel's far-famed chimney, rises among its poplars on the further side of the Stadhouse. Strange enough is the historical contrast between the condition of the towns, with their stately architecture and civilization, and that of the open country, where old Flemish ferocity and heathenism lingered far down into the middle ages. The Frank, especially that portion of it toward the sea, and indeed the whole line of the coast as far as Furnes, protected the ancient ghildes—associations for common defence and support, not a little dreaded by the Carolingian chieftains, who sought to master the Flemings and their country. From these ghildes sprang the freedom and prosperity of Flanders; but except in the towns, it was long before they rose above their early barbarism. 'The nearer the sea, the ruder the folk,' says the historian Meyer. Those wide sandy dunes that glisten in the far distance, now alive only with the sea-breeze, or (as old Ubbo Emmius describes the similar coasts of East Friesland) with the ringing songs of innumerable larks, re-echoed incessantly to very different sounds—the feuds of the 'karls'—no two settlements of whom were ever permanently at peace. Long torches (*bacchæ*) tossed high into the air, or raised on the summits of the dunes, were the signals that called together the villages for fight, armed with the *scharm-sax*—the short Saxon sword—or with the great knotted club, to which some kind of religious character was attached, from its likeness to the hammer of Thor. Hence the name of 'colve,' or clubkarls; a title with which Mr. Oldbuck was not unacquainted, and which has been found in many corners of England and Scotland, besides Monkbarns. 'No one ever succeeded in bringing them into subjection,' says the monk of St. Victor, 'king, count, or



baron.' They became divided at length into two great bodies—Blauvoets, (Yellow Feet)—apparently an old Northern name of the fox,—and Isengrims, or wolves. Between these the strife was perpetual ; and the chronicler of the Abbey of Dunes records it as an especial mark of the Divine favour, that for an entire twelve-months not a single drop of blood had fallen within the precincts of the monastery :

“ They burnt my little lonely tower—  
The foul fiend rive their souls therefore ;  
It had not been burnt a year or more.”

Blauvoets and Isengrims were alike banded against the nobles of the castles and towns :—‘ Fierce are the karls,’ says an old Flemish ballad, ‘ with their rough beards and their ragged jerkins. They think to strike down the knights. With their clubs, and their knives stuck into their belts, they go as proud as a count, and think all the world belongs to them. May heaven curse them ; and as for us, we will spur our horses over their plains—we will drag them in the mud, and hang them on gibbets.’\*

It was among these karls, however, that the earliest laws and free institutions of ‘ Flandersland ’ were preserved. They were the first to raise the sea-dykes,—the protection of the land from the ever-encroaching waves of the German Ocean. ‘ He who breaks through the dyke,’ says an old Flemish law, ‘ shall lose his right hand.’ The ghilde associations were worked upon and turned to good account by the monks who settled among them, and who there, as elsewhere, were the great pioneers of civilization. Munickreede, founded by Irish missionaries, on the northern coast—Sithiu, on the southern frontier—and later, the great Cistercian Abbey of the Dunes, near Furnes, all bore a part in the work, and soon saw their labours rewarded. But the house of the Dunes was the especial tamer of the Blauvoets. More than two hundred lay

\* *Oudvlaemsche liederen*,—pub. par l’Abbé Carton.—Bruges.

brethren worked at different trades in the extensive buildings by which the monastery was surrounded. The library contained more than a thousand manuscripts ; and the church was so famous for its wood carvings, that one of the brethren crossed the seas, at the request of the Abbot of Melrose—perhaps the same Father Ingelram to whose good deeds brother Nicholas of Kennaquhair was fond of recurring—in order to superintend the decoration of the choir of his Abbey Church. It was on their brakes and meadows, however, that the white monks of the Dunes laboured most incessantly ; and the lands about the monastery were cultivated by them with so much care and success, that Abbot Nicholas of Bailleul was wont pleasantly to remark, that the dunes were no longer sandhills, but had become mountains of silver. The Dunes, like the other monasteries, had its distant farms and forests, where, as also in the grange or home farm, the Cistercians taught their rude neighbours how to construct their dykes, to drain their marshes, and to cultivate their fields. All this tended to improvement in every way. Flanders became famous for her grain, and still more for her ale and beer. *Gens tibi, Flandrena, cibus est et potus avena*, runs the old monkish rhyme. The flocks and herds of her rich pastures—the abundance of butter, cheese, and milk—and the strong Flemish horses, *Flandria ferax equorum*,—famous throughout Europe long before Saccharissa sighed for her coach and six fat Flanders mares,—all attract the attention and the praise of foreign writers. In the year 1300, when Count Guy de Dampierre and a large company of Flemish knights became the captives of the French king, Philip le Bel, the wives of the Flemish nobles sent presents to the wives of their husband's gaolers, in the hope of rendering their imprisonment less severe. Among the cloths, and falcons, and gilded hanaps, appear several 'goodly Flemish cows ;' no doubt that same black-and-white breed that Cuyp and Paul Potter loved to

paint, and that still sparkles below us in the sunshine, wherever a green meadow lies spread out between the woods.

All this time the Carillon has been vigorously sounding. Mr. Longfellow's 'nuns of the choir' have somewhat loud voices when thus heard close at hand ; and as to the ' great bell sounding 'mong them like the chanting of a frère,' his reverence must have fortified himself well with Flemish beer before he could have sent forth such a *voix de Gargantua*. We shall like them better under the elms of the Beguinage : so let us descend from our lofty chamber, and perhaps look in at the wonderful Hemmlings in the Hôpital de St. Jean—never to be seen too often—as we pass along through the now quiet streets.

## SKETCHES AND STUDIES FROM BELGIUM.

### IV. A VISIT TO THE CHÂTEAUX OF RUBENS AND TENIERS.\*

MY DEAR —,

Every one who visits Antwerp, whether he cares anything about the matter or not, goes through, as a part of his duty, a certain amount of Rubens-pilgrimage. Of course he sees the great pictures in Nôtre Dame and the Museum; and reverences the leathern chair, with its faded wreath of *immortelles*, in which Rubens presided over the festivities of the ancient Guild of St. Luke. Some few penetrate to the chapel of St. Jacques, where the 'Toparch of Steen'—as the Latin inscription is pleased to call the great painter—lies buried; and where his own stately figure, clad in the armour of St. George, and the faces of his wives, his father, and his children, look down upon you in patriarchal array from the altar-piece. A smaller number still visit his once magnificent house, with its open court and gardens, now divided and remodelled; and whoever was in the fine old city during the Art Exhibition of the Guild of St. Luke, might have rejoiced in sundry other relics of the 'King of Antwerp.' The sword, with its chased and gilded hilt, used by Charles I. in conferring the honour of knight-hood upon Sir Peter Paul, and the letters patent granted to him on the same occasion, both from the collections of an amateur of Louvain; and a collar of the ancient Society of Arquebusiers, given to Rubens by the 'King' of the guild,

\* *Fraser's Magazine*, January, 1858.

who chanced also to be the Burgomaster of Antwerp, during the well-known treaty for the 'Descent,' were duly exhibited, among quaint old Flemish drinking glasses, engraved 'hanaps' and beer cups, and delicately carved ivories by Pompe and Duquesnoy. One also among the many Rubenses that glowed along the walls is not soon to be forgotten—a portrait of his mother, Marie Pypelynx. She is dressed in black, with a broad Spanish ruff; and if the picture be indeed that of the Antwerp burgher's daughter (of which there may possibly be a doubt), the firm compressed lips, the eye clear and full of intellect, and the broad, high forehead, indicate that in Rubens' case as in most others, a full share of genius came to him from the side of his mother.

With Antwerp, however, the visitor generally considers his duties to Rubens at an end. Of course he looks at the pictures in the different churches, as the Guide-Books tell him; but as none of these do more than remark that 'Steen, formerly the château of Rubens, and Drytoren, that of Teniers, lie to the left in passing from Mechlin to Brussels,' nobody dreams of putting himself out of his way in order to pay them a visit. In one of Lever's stories you may remember a certain 'Château de Vandyck,' in which an unhappy Englishman thought fit to set up the staff of his rest. He is visited by a fellow-countryman, who on his return home publishes a *Walk through Flanders*, and 'discovers' the château to the world of admiring tourists. The consequences are frightful. The unfortunate Englishman is allowed no rest by night or by day. Half Europe storms his *salons*, and sweeps through them with the most perfect indifference to their owner. He is insulted in his visitors' book; and the nearest approach to civility is made by an eminent cheesemonger, who presents his card with a 'Happy to see you, Mr. Vandyck, if at any time you should come into the City.' Let me hope I shall



bring no such calamities on the present representative of the Seigneurs of Steen, to which château I am going to tell you the result of my own pilgrimage. May he continue to enjoy in peace his pipe and his glass of 'Peetermans,' and long reign, as at present, the honoured friend and patron of all the crossbow shooters within the old-fashioned commune of Elewyt.

You may walk to Steen either from Vilvorde or from Mechlin. (I like the '*langue d'ya*' better than the '*langue d'oui*,' and 'Mechlin' calls up very different associations from 'Malines.') It lies about midway between the two places, though at some distance from the stone-paved, beech-bordered road that passes through them towards Brussels. The pleasanter way is perhaps that from Mechlin, along the banks of the Louvain Canal, and then turning off among the fir woods of the old château of Scheplaken. Patches of open heathery ground, and grassy paths through the firs, with a bit of Rubens-red sparkling here and there in the distance, in the shape of some labourer's jacket, will bring you to the village of Elewyt, with its guiding church-spire; and close by, a road, that turns down by a great oak tree, with an image of 'Onze lieve Vrow' perched among its branches, leads to the 'Casteel op Steen,' as the place is always called by the villagers.

The house itself, however, is so thickly surrounded with wood that you scarcely get a glimpse of it until close in front. The approach leads straight through the farm, still, as nearly as may be, of the same extent as when in the possession of the great painter. It contains about thirty-five 'hectares' of the richest possible land: such green meadows, dotted with such 'goodly Flemish cows,' the same black-and-white breed that Cuyt and Paul Potter loved to paint, and that still sparkles in the sunshine over all the lowlands of Flanders and Brabant. Then comes a long narrow avenue



of limes and poplars, and after passing it, you find yourself among the farm buildings of the château, of which even now you can only catch a crenellated battlement here and there between the trees. On the right is a mill with its dashing water-wheel, where we must stop for a moment, for its history is connected with that of the château.

The Castle of Steen was for some time the property of Guymard, an architect of some reputation, and the builder of the church of St. Jacques sur Coudenberg, in the Place Royale, at Brussels, fronting you as you ascend the Montagne de la Cour. Guymard had not the slightest respect for Steen, either as an ancient stronghold, or as the favourite *campagne* of Rubens. He pulled down the greater part of the building, including a lofty square tower, the distinguishing mark of a Brabançon *slot* or fortress ; and destroyed the parks and pleasure-grounds which Rubens himself had created :

Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these,  
Beggard and outraged.

It is satisfactory to be able to add that M. Guymard was entirely ruined during his operations at Steen. Of all his doings, nothing but the mill—which has some slight architectural ornament—now remains. Steen is now the property of Baron Coppens, of Antwerp, the reclamer of vast tracts of uncultivated land in the desolate Campine ; and the utmost care is taken to prevent any further destruction or decay.

Steen, although still dignified with the name of *casteel*, serves now only as a large farm-house. And yet, in spite of its fallen condition, as you stand before the bridge that crosses the moat, the front differs scarcely at all from what it was in the time of Rubens. You may see it, just as it is at present, in the well-known picture in our own Gallery, with the exception of the high seigneurial tower which occurs in the picture, and for the destruction of which we are indebted,

as I have already said, to M. Guymard. Like every château throughout the Netherlands, it is surrounded by a deep moat, fed, as is the architect's mill, by a small canal from the Veune, that passes by at no great distance. These *étangs* were *très poissonneuses*, as my conductor assured me, and most carefully attended to in the painter's time ; but are now entirely neglected. Sword-leaved waterflags, and clusters of purple loosestrife grow thick ly along the sides ; and now and then a solitary water-hen comes rustling through the brushwood, and flits across the sleeping moat. In front of the château, tall poplars and beeches rise up closely ; and the weather-worn walls, spotted with lichens, and crested with steep *Flandrikan* roofs, look out grey and picturesquely from behind their screen of green leafage. An arched entrance leads into a heavy square tower—the original 'Steen,' or stronghold (the 'tower o' *stane* and *lime*' of the old Scottish ballads) ; and on either side are later additions, rambling and irregular, the upper-windows of which are set in crow-step gables. You cross the moat by a bridge of three arches, the construction of Rubens himself, who replaced with it a *pont-levant*, the hollows for the chains of which still remain. Arbalist holes, too, look out at you from either side of the tower as you pass. As the old iron-barred doors are unfolded, you half expect to see the great painter, on his stately Andalusian, come sweeping towards you over the bridge, with his long train of attendants—dogs, falconers and all ; or his face seems to look down from the narrow window of his *atelier*—that directly over the arch of the entrance. The moat and the bridge and the guarded tower all indicate a place of strength, such as was not to be despised even in the comparative quiet of Rubens' time, when bands of lawless *ruyters*, or troops of Spanish horsemen, were still every now and then passing across the country.

Beyond the bridge, you pass straight through the lower

story of the tower into what was once the inner court of the castle, but is now a pleasant old-fashioned garden, with beds of damask roses, clove pinks, and white lilies. Along the walls of the old tower are trained figs and pear-trees, covered when I saw them with clusters of ruddy fruit, such as you may admire in some of Rubens' own pictures. There is a peculiar vine, too, with a small parsley-like leaf, said to have been brought to Steen by the great painter himself. This garden stretches on beyond, with espalier walks and *cabinets de verdure*, into what was the old *plaisance* of the château—still a garden, but only showing by a green mound or two, or a trench led across from the moat, how stately and decorated it has once been. There are two or three Rubens portraits in which this *plaisance* of Steen, with its balustrades and its peacocks, is made to play its part ; and one, formerly in the collection of M. Schamp, of Ghent, peoples the shady alleys too pleasantly not to be recalled upon the scene itself. In the background are the crenells and turrets of the château ; and down one of the main walks comes a group of Rubens' own children, the youngest riding on a gigantic wolf-dog, which his sister leads by the collar. There is many a more famous picture of his that one would less care to possess.

You may enter the château from the garden, through a door in the projecting staircase turret, running upward along the side of the main tower ; first visiting, if you choose, the vaults of the old fortress,—filled, no doubt, in the days of Rubens, rather with Burgundy and Rhine-wine than with any more warlike stores. The narrow stair winds up to the floor above the entrance, where is the painter's *atelier* ; and then into the wide dusky *greniers*, crossed with heavy beams of stout Brabant oak—a tree becoming every day rarer in the country. All this part of the building is evidently of great antiquity, and a stone chimney-piece in one of the

upper rooms may possibly be of the fourteenth century. The porch chamber—said to have served as the painter's working-room—is now entirely bare and dismantled. It is about fifteen feet square, and is lighted by a single window, of which the oaken shutters and worked iron fastenings still remain. You may fancy him there busy on the garden picture of his children, whilst Vandenborcht or Justus van Egmont read to him from Seneca or Plutarch, according to his regular habit. It was in this room, in all probability, that he painted the noble landscape now in our own Gallery ; but to judge of the scene itself, you must climb again above the *atelier* into the highest *grenier*, where flax-seeds and sweet-scented garden herbs are spreading to dry, and into which you pass among the traces of numberless owls and pigeons that have taken common possession of the peaked staircase turret. But cross the wide *grenier*, unbar one of the closed shutters at the end, and before you stretches away the vast cloud-swept landscape, just as in the picture that Mr. Ruskin, as you will remember, singles out for praise among all by which it is surrounded. To sit here, with the picture itself beside you, would be such a lesson as has fallen to the lot of few indeed among 'modern painters.' Below, the scene has become so much closed up with wood that the eye is prevented from ranging to any distance ; but, looking from the top of the tower, it is still Rubens' own : patches of wood and coppice, meadows spotted over with cattle, corn-fields swept by cloud-shadows, poplars along the streams, with gleams of farms, and white *campagnes*, and mills, and church towers intermingling and crossing, and passing more and more indistinctly into the far-away blue distance, where, as the sun lights them up, you may catch the many spires and towers of Mechlin rising against the sky. That there may be beauty, and great beauty, with a perfectly level landscape, you will scarcely doubt, after having once

looked over that scene—changing constantly, like the ocean, with the cloud shadows that break and float across it. These are the effects of light that Rubens so well knew how to seize and how to vary; witness the thick floating mist of the Louvre, or the rainbow also there, or the sunrise shot through the forest at Munich. But this is dangerous ground; we had better descend from the *grenier*, and look into the lower apartments of the château.

Immediately to the right, on entering by the great doors from the bridge, is a small antechamber, opening at one end into a still smaller chapel. Here there yet remain an altar and some of its ornaments, but all of much later date than the time of Rubens. He is said, however, to have regularly attended morning mass in this chapel, whilst the antechamber was filled by his household. A curious but much-injured landscape lies on an old cabinet in this antechamber. The story is that of Cephalus and Procris; and the picture itself is said to be the work of one of Rubens' favourite pupils. It is mainly interesting, however, from its having remained till now in the house where possibly it was painted under the master's own direction. On the opposite side of the entrance passage lie the kitchens—still untouched and unaltered—of no great size, but with wide, hospitable-looking fireplaces, sufficient for the preparation of a goodly feast when Jordaens or Quellyn came over from Antwerp,—or when a company of the Archduke's courtiers rode across the country to visit the great painter in his retirement. The light struggles through the knotted window quarrels, and glimmers upon the tall brass 'hanaps' and water-flagons just as it did then;—the unwelcome difference is that you no longer hear the cook scolding at his work, and that no pleasant savour of baked pheasant or red-deer pasty comes curling up to greet the nostrils of the hungry visitor.

The rooms in the remaining part of the building, although



nearly the same externally, have all been altered within ; nor are they in any way interesting, for the main *corps de batimens* which occupied the inner court was pulled down by the architect Guymard.

It was only for the last four years of his life that Rubens became Seigneur of Steen, and was in the habit of spending his summers there. After his visits to England, Spain, and Holland, when the painter condescended to employ his leisure in playing the part of ambassador,—and after his second marriage with Helena Forman in 1630, Rubens never left his own country. He had laboured long and unremittingly, and his frequent travels had not been without their own share of hardship. The gout, too, tormented him not a little ; and when, in 1635, the Cardinal Ferdinand made his *joyeuse entrée* into Antwerp, Rubens, who had designed all the magnificent triumphal arches erected on the occasion, was unable to ride through the town at the Cardinal's right hand, as had been at first intended. From this time, amply laden with 'honour, love, obedience, troops of friends'—he retired to Steen, rarely visiting the Court or interfering in its affairs. Rubens purchased Steen from Jan Coels—an old Brabançon name—still common in the district ; and the original papers, with his signature, are still carefully preserved at the 'Casteel.\*' Here he

\* A short time after his purchase, Rubens writes to Peiresc, excusing his long silence. He had been, he says, for some months in a 'villa' of his, 'alquanto ritirato della citta d'Anversa,' very secluded, and at some distance from the main road, so that the receipt or despatch of letters was equally difficult. 'I must not omit to tell you,' he goes on to say, 'that many ancient medals have been found here, silver and bronze—the greater part of the time of the Antonines. It was not of bad augury that the two first discovered were of Commodus and Marcus ; the reverses, "Spes et Victoria." The letter is dated 'di Steen, il 4 di Settembre, 1636.' (Gachet, *Lettres Inédites de P. P. Rubens*, p. 275.) The 'good augury' must have been for his future life at Steen. He did not neglect the 'provisioning' of his castle. 'Il nous semble étrange,' he writes (August 17, 1638) to his pupil, Lucas Fayd'herbe, 'que nous n'apprenions rien des bouteilles



spent all his summers until his death in 1640,—still painting vigorously, as we know by his catalogue and by the works themselves; but principally occupying himself with landscapes suggested by the quiet, pleasant country about him. ‘Rubens,’ says M. Michiels, in his *Histoire de la Peinture Flamande et Hollandaise*, ‘never mixed his labours. His different classes of subject are kept perfectly distinct: but in his landscapes he shows that the absolute solitude of nature displeased him—at least as contrasted with the great love of it manifested by the earlier Flemings. Thus his love of life led him to fill every portion of his landscapes with action.’ But, with submission, would it not be difficult to point out any early Flemish painting in which absolute solitude is depicted—deep and profound as is the love of nature in them all? And that the ‘solitude of nature’ was very far from displeasing to the great painter of ‘The Descent’ and ‘The Adoration,’ we know, not only from the facts of his life, but from the evidence of his pictures themselves,—the grey ‘dawn’ of the Hermitage, for instance, or the Munich ‘sunrise’ already mentioned.

It has generally been supposed that the great pictures at Mechlin—the superb ‘Adoration,’ in the church of St. John,\* and ‘The Miraculous Draught,’ in that of Nôtre Dame—were painted at Steen; and M. Michiels traces in the latter picture more than usual labour and refinement, the results of his summer retirement. But neither ‘The Adoration,’ nor ‘The de vin d’Ay; car celui que nous avons apporté avec nous est déjà épuisé. . . . Rappelez également à Guillaume le jardinier (at Antwerp) qu’il doit nous envoyer en leur temps des poires de Rosalie, et des figes quand il y en aura, ou quelque autre chose d’agréable.’ (Gachet.)

\* The original sketch for this picture—the finest of all Rubens’ many repetitions of the subject—*was* in Lord Bute’s collection at Luton. It was engraved by Vosterman, under Rubens’ own care. The sketch in crayons by one of Rubens’ pupils, with his own retouches, is now in the Musée at Paris. Unfortunately the light in the church is bad, and it is difficult to get a good view of the picture.

Draught'—the pride of the Mechlin Fishmongers' Guild, for whom it was painted—were in reality produced here. Both were painted (as the accounts still preserved at Mechlin prove) at Antwerp : the first in 1616, the latter in 1618, long before Rubens had dreamt of becoming seigneur of Steen. His frequent visits to Mechlin, as he passed through on his way to Brussels, and possibly the neighbourhood of David Teniers, who had already established himself at Drytoren, within a walk of Steen, may have induced Rubens to settle there. Tradition, too, asserts that Vandyke had a *campagne* in the adjoining commune of Eppeghem, where the green mound on which the house stood, encircled by the never-failing moat, is still pointed out. A pleasant trio, indeed, with which to re-people the lime avenues of Steen. But we are going to visit Teniers at his own house, and must therefore leave the old 'Casteel' once more to its dreamy quiet, with the swallows flitting about its gables, and its moat sleeping tranquilly in the sunshine.

Drytoren is not much more than an English mile from Steen. The walk is a very pleasant one ;—by cornfields and patches of oaken coppice, fringed here and there with banks of heather, now in full blossom. After leaving the woods of Steen, the country becomes more open. It is here a wide plain in full tillage, with farms and scattered trees about it, and deeper woods bounding the horizon. In the distance rises the square tower of Grimberghen, with its memories of the battle of the Cradle, and the fierce struggles of the Berthouts—the old Lords of Mechlin—against the increasing power of the Dukes of Brabant. Vilvorde, with its spires and its white houses, looks out cheerfully from its screen of trees ; and low green hills sweep away beyond towards Laaken and Brussels. Over all hangs the dome of the sky, now covered with grey floating clouds, between which falls a gleam of sunshine, resting upon the roofs of Drytoren.

Between Teniers' farm and Steen there is just as much difference as between the velvet and 'cloth of gold' of Rubens' portraits and the 'cloth of frieze' of the *joyeuse Kermesse*. Drytoren, or 'the Three Towers,' was never a château of any great size or importance ; and whereas Steen lorded it in solitary dignity over the commune of Elewyt, Drytoren was eclipsed by the magnificent domain of Perck, whose towers and terraces and clipped avenues you may see represented, with all the honour due to them, in the old 'Delices de Brabant.' Rubens, too, still reigns supreme at Steen. His is the great memory of the place, and the whole district is proud of his connexion with it. Teniers has fared differently at Drytoren. Though all the country round speaks of him—for you see his farms, and his trees, and his peasants at every step and at every turn—his very name is unknown to the worthy 'boer' and 'boerinne' who preside over the farmyards and the dairies of what was once his own abiding place. The house itself has all but disappeared. Of the 'three towers,' only one remains. This is the gate tower ; no work of 'lime and stane,' but of rough timber, high and square, with a 'broken-backed' steep roof and ornamented weather boards—a form constantly recurring in Teniers' pictures. The under part forms a low wooden archway, opening into the court ; and above it is a single room, for the sake of which the tower was probably spared when all the rest was destroyed—for it was the artist's painting room. The farm building within is large and substantial, and of some age, having about it all the accompaniments of a wealthy cultivator ; but no part is of Teniers' time. It was long past mid-day when we entered—and 'the house did keep itself;' there was no one within, and no sounds without, but such as came from the distant fields, and the cooing of multitudes of pigeons, sunning themselves on the roofs of Teniers' *atelier*. Alongside the farm stretched a level of bright green turf, scattered over with walnuts and apple trees ; and

beyond, through their stems, a cornfield, with waggons and horses ; the sun chequering and changing over all. Leave was to be taken, since none could be asked ; so we unbarred a door at the foot of the tower, and climbed up into the room where sundry of those ‘magots’ were produced that Louis, *le grand Monarque*, found so little to his liking, but of which George, *le premier gentilhomme*, approved so highly. It is now merely a *grenier*, about fifteen feet square, lighted by a single window, and with rude crossing beams of oak above and at the sides. The spaces between the beams have been covered with a paper ; and it is said that no long time since rough sketches and ‘scratches’ were to be traced here and there on the boards. All has disappeared now ; and you must draw on your own stores for the picture of ‘Teniers at work in his tower.’ The dark crossing beams and the rough walls, the casement shutters thrown back, and the cheerful, sunny plain seen beyond them, would make the best of all possible frames for Mynheer David’s figure—not to be decked in velvet and gold chains like that of his more stately neighbour, although, as chambellan of the Archduke Leopold, he might display his golden key (in an engraving of him by Vosterman, nearly as large as that of a house door) whenever he thought fit.

We were still in the tower when the farmer’s wife came in from the fields, wondering not a little at the unexpected invasion of her territories. But ‘perhaps Mynheers were fond of pigeons, and had climbed up to see them ; there were some very rare sorts. Not the pigeons? Ah, yes ; she *had* heard that some one used formerly to paint in the tower. Was it either of the Mynheers themselves?’ Such is the reputation of David Teniers at Drytoren ; and yet, as the good ‘Vrow’ sat there on the ground in front of the tower, with her baby in her arms, and the sun streaming upon her bright blue jacket, her close cap and red handkerchief, she looked like a figure cut out of his own *joyeuse Kermesse*.

Teniers fixed himself early at Drytoren. He had already been a pupil of Rubens (a daughter of whose friend, Breughel, he had married), and had obtained considerable reputation. But his pictures at first were not readily disposed of. He was obliged to take them himself to Brussels ; and it was not until he had (partly, we may believe, by Rubens' assistance) obtained the notice of the Court that he began to take his true position in the world. From that time, indeed, he rose rapidly. Half the dignitaries of Spain and of the Low Countries were constant visitors at the old pointed-roofed château. The Archduke John of Austria himself became his pupil, and is said to have not only visited him at Drytoren, but to have painted one of his children as a special mark of honour—for, of course there can be no such thing as a bad portrait from an archducal hand. Two gigantic black eagles, compliments to the House of Austria, were to be seen not long since on the folding doors of the gate tower. They are said to have been painted by Teniers himself ; but doors and all have now disappeared.

Long after Rubens had been laid to rest in St. Jacques, and after Steen had passed into other hands, Teniers was still preserving the art distinction of the district at Drytoren,—having succeeded also to his great master as President of the Guild of St. Luke. Among the closest of his friends was Antoine Triest, the excellent Bishop of Ghent ; a fact which sufficiently attests the blameless character of the artist's own life. One piece of information, moreover, patronised by all the Guide-Books, must not be passed over here. All, French and English, agree in informing the world that at Termonde, between Ghent and Mechlin, Teniers married his third wife ; and that the house in which he lived is still to be seen there, together with some curious relics of the marriage. The whole of this statement, third wife and all, has arisen from a singular mistake which has only very recently been cleared up,—

#### IV. THE CHÂTEAUX OF RUBENS AND TENIERS. 457

too recently for the benefit of the Guide-Books. There is unquestionably in Termonde a house which was inhabited by David Teniers ; and there is preserved in it a picture of a marriage 'tribulation,' with Flemish couplets at the foot relating to the same David Teniers, who is named in them. In the picture, the bridegroom is attempting to climb into his chamber by a ladder, and is prevented by his companions below ; whilst the bride holds her arms out to him through the window bars. It is dated August 4th, 1671, and is signed J. E. Q.,—no doubt Jean Erasmus Quellyn. All this seemed reasonably enough to confirm the universal tradition that Teniers had married a third wife at Termonde ; and it was not until some one thought of examining the records of the town, that the true explanation was discovered. There it was found that, on the 4th of August, 1671, David Teniers of Brussels and Anna Maria Bonaerents were married *in the presence of Mynheer David Teniers, Chambellan of the Archdukes Leopold and John of Austria*, and of Jean Erasmus Quellyn. It is guessed that *this* David was the son of Abraham Teniers—also a painter and engraver, living at Brussels, and the brother of David of Drytoren.\*

Teniers lies buried in the little church of Perck, whose spire rises among the beeches on the other side of the plain. The village is pleasant and picturesque, with gabled houses and low-roofed cabarets, interspersed with old, wide-branched walnut trees. It is full of Tenierses—interiors and exteriors. Almost every window is a picture ; and as you look through

\* Madou ; *Scènes de la Vie des Peintres de l'Ecole Flamande et Hollandaise*. The entry in the Termonde records runs thus :—' 1671. Aug. 4. Habitâ dispensatione super proclamationibus, juncti sunt matrimonio David Teniers, Bruxellensis, et Anna Maria Bonaerents, puella Teneramundana : præsentibus Dnis Davide Teniers, à cubiculis Archducibus Leopoldo et Joanni Austriacis, et Joanne Erasmo Quellyno, et Joannâ van Calandries, et me pastore. Signat. J. B. Taelman.'



the open doors you may see groups of strangely fashioned shining brass vessels, with wrinkled, red-jacketed vrows at work about them ; the cat sleeping in the sun, and the old 'housefather' resting in his high-backed chair by the open hearth,—just the same as you have admired fifty times before ; or there is a group drinking and card-playing before the door of a cabaret, whilst a grand old walnut tree rustles in the breeze beside them ; and away, beyond the houses, a mill on its green mound, with its sails sweeping round in the sunshine. Unfortunately we just missed the Kermesse of Perck ; it had taken place the week before our visit ; and so the finest opportunity of all for seeing Teniers' pictures was lost. The church has no architectural character ; and its most important distinction has, I am sorry to say, lately been removed during the building of a new aisle. The *domus ultima* of the family of Teniers *was* marked by a flat stone slab, on which was a short inscription in Flemish. This is no longer to be seen, nor could I ascertain what had become of it. The only relic of the painter still remaining in the church, is a figure of the Crucified Saviour within a large wreath of flowers. The figure alone is his. The flowers are most probably by his friend Seghers. A larger and more important Teniers—I believe a Saint Dominic—which is mentioned as having been in the church of Perck, seems also to have disappeared.

## XI.

### A PILGRIMAGE TO ST. DAVID'S.\*

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THE halidom of a great saint is always a district of more than usual interest. Its architectural relics are frequently of striking character and of great antiquity. Customs and ceremonies, forgotten elsewhere, often linger about the shrine with which they were once connected, shattered and even destroyed as that may be ; and above all, the country is certain to contain those early and picturesque traditions which, however they may have arisen, connect the saint and his story with the surrounding natural features, the hills, the rocks, and the streams. Local folk-lore, having its roots far back in the soil of heathenism, has almost always been gathered into and made a portion of the religious legend. History again, and her handmaid geography, nowhere reflect such light on one another as in such a district.

There is no such 'terra sancta' in any part of Great Britain, perhaps none in Christendom, more remarkable than Dewisland, as the hundred is called—the land of Dewi (the Welsh form of David)—a territory which, like Ireland, all noxious creatures are forbidden to enter, though it is said that in this respect the power of the saint is losing somewhat of its ancient force. The land of the great patron of Wales, the only Welsh or Cornish saint who has received a formal place in the calendars of the Western Church, is in itself so wild and isolated, the coast which bounds it is one of such surpassing grandeur,

\* *Fraser's Magazine*, April, 1871.

and the mysterious relics of days far more primitive than those of the saint—cromlechs, rude stone shafts, and cliff castles—are here so numerous, that these attractions would alone be sufficient to draw the antiquary or the lover of nature to the promontory of St. David's—with the exception of the Land's End, the most westerly headland of Great Britain. But to these must be added the historical interest of the district, the traces yet lingering in it of the real St. David, besides those which mark his legendary story ; and the wonderful group of buildings over which the cathedral presides, clustered in the hollow of a wild valley and backed by rocky hills of true mountainous outline. The place was always remote and difficult of access, and the toils and dangers encountered by pilgrims to the shrine gave rise to the saying that two visits to St. David's equalled the merit of one visit to Rome :

*Meneviam pete bis, Roman adire si vis,  
Æqua merces tibi redditur hic et ibi.  
Roma semel quantum dat bis Menevia tantum.*

A glance at the map will show at once the extreme westerly position of St. David's. It is the point at which the British coast approaches most nearly to that of Ireland, and the outlines of the Wicklow hills are occasionally seen across the Channel, here not quite fifty miles in breadth. St. David's Head, the Octopitarum of Ptolemy, is itself the northernmost point of a broad promontory, separating the beautiful Bay of St. Bride's from that of Abereiddy. The coast of the promontory is broken into numerous small bays and inlets, guarded by lofty walls of rock, the dark colour of which contrasts finely with the surf that breaks against them. These rocks, which belong to the Cambrian series, the most ancient sedimentary rocks known to geologists, and which extend throughout Dewisland, indicate that the territory of St. David has existed as an island in more than one primæval sea, when (except the few points at which they also appear—only in Wales, and at

the Prawle and Bolt, the extreme southern headlands of Devonshire) the rest of Britain was still in course of formation beneath the waves. The surface formed by the Cambrian rocks is comparatively level ; but over the district, sometimes parallel with the coast, yet extending far inland, masses of igneous rock, greenstones, and porphyries have broken upwards and form rocky eminences, of no very great height, but occasionally, as in Carn Llidi, of the grandest and boldest outline, resembling in general character the granite tors that rise from the high table-land of Dartmoor. The open country is intersected by deep valleys, through which streamlets find their way to the sea, the most important of which are the Solva and the Alan. The latter is the river on which stands the Cathedral of St. David's.

The character of the country is seen at once from one of the rocky heights, and best of all from the peaked, jagged Carn Llidi—the 'rock of the black lion,' or the 'rock of the black host,' as the name is variously interpreted. It is a wide-horizoned district—for the eye ranges over half Pembrokeshire, including the farther coast of St. Bride's Bay, and seaward looks straight across to Ireland. The bare landscape, treeless, but with good corn land ; the lines of stone enclosures ; the brown moors, with their masses of broken rock and water splashes ; the blown sands, and the 'grisly, fiendy rockës blake' of the coast recal the scenery of the Orkneys, of the remoter parts of Brittany and Cornwall, and still more of the western coast of Scotland. In common with all similar regions, and partly owing to its monotonous landward colouring, Dewisland has a grave, half-sad expression, which, toward the twilight of a stormy day, is greatly increased by the whitened walls and roofs of the scattered farms. The slated roofs are said to be preserved and strengthened by this whitening and are thus better able to withstand the strong winds that constantly sweep over the country. The air, bracing as it is, is soft and

exquisitely pure. There is little or no frost. Very large hydrangeas display their pink and blue flowers within the stone walls of many a cottage garden, and the ilex, where it has been planted, grows to a considerable size. This mildness of climate, if we are to believe that it existed at the earlier periods of the historical era, cannot have been without its influence on the primitive settlement of the coast, and may partly account for the many 'cyttiau,' or hut-circles, enclosures, and cliff castles, which bear witness to a considerable ancient population. It may well be remembered, too, in considering the lives of the first Christian solitaries and ascetics, among whom was St. David himself, who founded their oratories in this remote district.

Such a country as this, wild and bare as it is, is one of those over which the sky-changes are most numerous and impressive. Every cloudlet, or the faintest break of light, produces its effect; and turning seaward, where the monotony of colouring at once disappears, nothing can exceed the beauty of the varying light and shadow, the half-veiling mists and the bursts of sunshine, as they follow each other along the lines of the rocky headlands and far over the open sea. From Carn Llidi the whole extent of coast is in sight, beyond a foreground of heath and fern, strewn with rocky fragments, and stretching away to the dark cliffs of St. David's Head, marked by its stone rampart, 'Clawd-y-milwyr'—the 'Warrior's Dyke'—within which rise foundations of huts, cushioned with sea pink, and whitened by foam flakes carried by the wind across the headland. Here it is seen that off the whole coast lie numerous rocky islands. The largest and most important is Ramsey, with a fine mountainous outline, and a range of cliff precipices on its seaward front, haunted in spring and summer by myriads of sea-birds, whose eggs are taken with as much zeal as in Norway or the Faroe Islands, and with hardly less difficulty. Seals frequent the caverns at the base of the cliffs; and it is said that no long

time since as many as forty, young and old, were taken in one night, after a net had been stretched across the mouth of the cave. These cliff ranges are grander than those of the mainland; but they are less dangerous to seamen than the smaller rocks which lie off the north side of Ramsey, known as 'The Bishop and his Clerks'—of course with a reference to the neighbouring 'bishopstool' of St. David's. Ringed with surf, they rise black and splintered, and 'are not withoute some small quiristers, who shewe not themselves but at spring tydes and calme seas. . . . The Bishop and these his Clerkes preache deadly doctrine to their winter audience, such poor seafaring men as are forcyd thether by tempest; onlie in one thing they are to be commended, they keep residence better than the rest of the canons of that see are wont to do.'\* The Sound of Ramsey, between the island and the mainland, is filled with dangerous currents and eddies, and is not always easy of crossing. Beyond the island stretches away the Dewisland coast, with its headlands, its narrow 'porths' or havens, and its solitary ruined chapels, all connected with St. David, and at all of which seamen were accustomed to make offerings. Then follows the sweep of St. Bride's Bay; and off the mainland, at its southern point, the islands of Skomar and Skogholm—recalling the Danes and Norsemen by whom for more than one century they were frequented, and from whom they received their present names. Against the horizon, on the farther shore of St. Bride's Bay, rise the ruined towers of Roche Castle, one of the many strongholds raised by the Norman conquerors for securing the subjection of South Wales. Thus the view from Carn Llidi presents existing relics, and suggests recollections, of the different races who have at various times possessed and frequented the district. The heathen Northmen paid little reverence to St. David or his cathedral.

\* From Owen's MS., quoted in Fenton's *Pembrokeshire*. A lighthouse has been erected on the south Bishop rock.



More than once they plundered the church and the 'House of the Clerks;' but it is probable that the shrine of the great Welsh saint formed a certain bond of union between the Welshmen of Dyfed and their Norman lords, and that the common reverence paid to it was not without effect in bringing the two races into better harmony—so far as such harmony was ever attained.

In this wild country, low in the hollow of the valley, the upper part of its tower just visible from Carn Llidi, and the stream of the Alan almost washing its western front, stands the great cathedral—'Ty Dewi,' as it was called—the 'House of David;' regarded for long ages by all true Welshmen as the most sacred spot in Britain. There are two very striking views, from the north-east and the south-east, of the cathedral and the group of surrounding buildings. Upon each of these views the stranger comes almost suddenly, owing to the steep fall of the river valley. Some trees cluster round the church on its north side, and, from their absence elsewhere, give an additional charm to the scene. In front extends the cathedral, chiefly dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, though the upper part of its tower, and nearly all its window tracery, built and inserted at a later period, give a Decorated character to its general exterior. The Lady chapel and adjoining portions are still in picturesque ruin. The restoration of the main body of the church, its nave and choir, is rapidly advancing. That of the choir and presbytery is complete. The nave, of transitional architecture, with a range of lofty clerestory arches much enriched, and with an elaborate oaken roof of the fifteenth century, which for the grace and intricacy of its peculiar ornament has no parallel in this country, is gradually recovering its ancient dignity and beauty. The warm colour of the stone of which the cathedral is built throughout combines with the richness of ornament to give an unusual air of completion to the interior. The eye does not

seek, as elsewhere, for the additional decorations of fresco and polychrome ; and even the bright hues of stained glass are not in too sharp contrast with the purples and dark greys of the sandstone. This stone, belonging to the ancient Cambrian rocks before mentioned, is brought from Caerfae, one of the most picturesque of the many small bays that indent the shore. No other important building in Great Britain is built of such primitive stone. Its use gives an additional and a fitting distinction to St. David's.

A gatehouse, with an enormous octagonal tower, so vast that, as has been suggested with much probability, it may have served as a campanile, opens to the Close from the crest of the hill. In the level of the valley and across the river, but closely adjoining the cathedral, with which it groups in every view, are the ruins of the bishop's palace—a vast and once magnificent structure, with a central court or quadrangle, now turfed with the brightest green sward, and a hall not unworthy of the most princely prelates. The composition bears ample testimony to the taste and architectural skill of Bishop Gower, by whom the palace was built in the reign of Edward III. Its outer walls are crested by a parapet of open arches, most striking in the ruined condition of the palace, and especially by moonlight. The architectural group is completed by the chapel of St. Mary's College, on the north side of the cathedral. This, like the palace, is a ruin ; but the walls, with a lofty and slender tower, remain entire, and contribute additional varieties of outline to the wonderful assemblage of buildings. No familiarity seems to lessen their effect. The lonely situation ; the wild background ; the picturesque grouping, and the rich details, especially of the palace ; the sharp contrast of the stately cathedral with the ferny hill-side close at hand, and the green river holms dotted with black cattle ; the exquisite colouring—grey, ruined, ivied walls, haunted by myriads of jackdaws, and tufted with pink valerian ; the

clear atmosphere, and the great arch of sky—day after day all these are seen and enjoyed with fresh delight and increasing wonder. The most unquestioning and least 'historical' of minds can hardly help asking how it happened that such a cathedral and such a group of buildings were raised in this extreme corner of the land ; or desiring to know something more of the saint whose 'house' it is, and to whose shrine pilgrims once found their way from all parts of Christendom.

Before attempting to trace, so far as that is possible, the history of St. David, it will be well to re-enter the church, and, like those earlier pilgrims, to visit what still remains of the shrine. The shrine of a great saint usually consisted of at least three very distinct portions : (1) the stone base or foundation, a sort of altar tomb, on which rested (2) the feretory or portable shrine, plated with gold or silver, enriched with jewels, and containing the actual relics of the saint. The feretory was ordinarily hidden by (3) a lofty covering of wood, carved and illuminated, which was raised by means of a pulley whenever the shrine was exhibited. The most usual position for a shrine of great importance was at the back of the high altar, between that and the extreme eastern end of the church. The shrines, for example, of St. Thomas at Canterbury and of the Confessor in Westminster Abbey were thus placed. In the Cathedrals of Llandaff and of St. David's, however, it does not appear that the shrines of St. Teilo or St. David occupied this position at any time. At Llandaff the shrine of St. Teilo most probably stood on the south side of the presbytery. At St. David's the shrine of the patron saint of Wales was on the north side of the presbytery, occupying the whole of the second bay counting from the west. What now remains of the shrine is only the stone foundation on which the feretory rested. This consists, towards the presbytery, of a table resting on three low pointed arches, with deep quatrefoils in

the spandrels. Three early English arches, in which anciently were painted figures of St. David, St. Patrick, and St. Denis, rise at the back of the table, and divide it from the aisle. The wall of the shrine toward the aisle has at the base three round-headed arches, and quatrefoils in the upper part. There can be no doubt that what we now see is part of the shrine begun by Bishop Richard de Carew in 1275 ; and it was before it, then in all its fresh splendour, that Edward I. and his queen Eleanor paid their vows and made their offerings when they visited St. David's in 1284, after the famous subjection of the Welsh princes. The quatrefoils in front and at the back of the shrine are now partly closed; but they seem to have been once sufficiently open to admit the passage of the hand into a small space at the back of each, in which offerings were deposited. No long time since, stones remained in the aisle, indented by the knees of the long train of pilgrims who century after century had prayed there. In 1086, after the first translation of St. David, the date of which is uncertain, his feretory or portable shrine was stolen from the church, carried out of the 'dinas' or city, and broken up, of course for the sake of its gold and jewels. Of the fate of the later feretory nothing is known ; nor are we anywhere told what became of the relics of St. David in the sixteenth century. The shrine was carried in solemn processions by the chantry priests ; and the burgesses of St. David's were bound in time of war to follow the bishop with it for one day's journey. It does not appear that on any occasion the shrine was conveyed beyond the limits of the halidom.

The shrine of St. David was especially frequented by pilgrims from all parts of Wales ; and it is somewhat remarkable that while certain of the saints' wells on the coast retain some portion of their ancient honour, no tradition is connected with the resting-place of the great saint, and no relic of the reverence once paid to it yet lingers. It is remembered that, not

many years since, an offering of money was placed in one of the quatrefoiled openings by a stranger who knelt before the shrine, and who, as it was believed, was 'a great lord' on a pilgrimage of penitence ; but the last vestige of local reverence seems to have died out about the beginning of the present century. At that time two old sisters, who lived at a farm-house in the neighbourhood, when they visited the Cathedral on Good Friday used to put off their 'clogs' or wooden shoes, at the top of the steps leading to the churchyard, and to walk barefooted down them into the church. In this manner pilgrims formerly approached the shrine. No such tradition of respect now clings to it. But, little honoured as St. David may be in his own country, we may well pause with reverence before the place so long regarded as that of his rest. Setting aside the legend that has grown up round his name, enough of truth is discoverable through the mists of antiquity to assure us that the prominence formerly assigned to him was not misplaced. From the school of learning and religion established here by him were sent forth some of the best and most active of the Irish missionary saints. If it be impossible to tread 'the barren rocks of Iona' without emotion, the old land of St. David, whence came the traditions and the teaching that St. Columbkille carried northward, may be regarded with at least an equal interest.

. The Life of St. David was compiled from ancient sources, as it is asserted, and probably within the last decade of the eleventh century, by Rhyddmarch, bishop of the see. Rhyddmarch's Life was re-written in more classic style, '*scholastico stilo*,' by Giraldus Cambrensis, the famous Archdeacon of Brecknock ; and one or two more lives of the saint, of less importance, are in existence. All, however, are founded on that by Rhyddmarch, which, whatever amount of truth it may contain, is so full of palpable legend that it can only be accepted as recording the belief held about St. David at

the time it was written. From other sources we glean the few facts of his history which may be looked upon as fairly ascertained.\*

It is impossible to fix with certainty any date in the life of St. David. According to the *Annales Cambriæ* he held a Council in the year 569, and died in 601. These dates are probably accurate. They harmonise sufficiently well with other and contemporary statements; and we may fairly enough regard the period between about 530 and 601 as that in which St. David lived. Throughout this period the English conquest was in progress. The kingdom of Wessex had gradually pushed forward its boundaries; and between the years 577 and 584 it advanced to the Severn, thus separating the Welsh principalities from the still British Damnonia, then comprising Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall. The British Church, during this time of conquest and of narrowing dominion, underwent many changes. It is probable that in the later days of the Romans, and for a short time afterwards, there was an episcopal see at Caerleon on Usk, presiding over the whole province of Britannia Secunda, the modern Wales. After the English conquests had narrowed the British border, the condition of Wales became greatly altered. The principalities of Gwynedd, of Powys, of Dyfed, and of Gwent arose; and soon afterwards an episcopal see was established in each principality, the limits of the diocese and of the principality being identical. The ancient see at Caerleon became extinct; and the whole change was thus one from Roman to British orga-

\* The most complete, and indeed exhaustive, work on St. David's, to which all subsequent writers are largely indebted, is Messrs. Jones and Freeman's *History and Antiquities of St. David's*—a quarto volume published in 1856. Material for the early history of the see has been carefully brought together in the first volume of *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, edited by Messrs. Haddan & Stubbs (1869). Dr. Todd's *Life of St. Patrick* (1864) contains many incidental notices of great value.



nisation. The four sees thus established were those which still exist in Wales—Bangor, St. Asaph, St. David's, and Llandaff. St. David was himself the founder and the first bishop of the see which bears his name.

The lives of St. David make him the son of Sannde, son of Ceredig, one of those chieftains, perhaps of Strathclyde, who drove the Irish Picts from Wales. Ceredig gave his own name to Cardiganshire, and Welsh genealogists traced his descent from a sister of the Virgin Mary.\* The mother of David, according to the same authorities, was Nonna or Non, descended like his father from the royal race. These genealogies are to be regarded with the utmost suspicion; but they are probably truthful in so far as they make David a native of his own district. That Dewisland is full of sites associated with the life of David does not perhaps prove much. The traditional scene of his birth is marked by a well and ruined chapel dedicated to his mother St. Non. They are distant but a few yards from each other, and are placed on the slope of a green combe, a little above the edge of the cliffs that stretch northward from Caerfae. In front opens the bay; and at the back the combe rises and folds round, so that the place has what shelter is attainable on so exposed a coast. The well is covered with a plain barrel vault, which was restored during the last century. At the side is a square recess, in which may have been deposited such offerings of 'pins and pebbles' as were formerly made. Ferns tufted in the wall hang over the water, which is still held to be of great virtue in the cure of certain disorders. The chapel, a small parallelogram, like some of the earliest Irish oratories, has large and rude blocks of stone in its foundations. Beneath the altar, according to the story in Rhyddmarch's Life,

\* The genealogy is given in the 'Buchedd Dewi Sant,' a Welsh Life of St. David, printed in Rees' *Lives of the Cambro-British Saints*, 1853.

was a part of a stone which leaped from the head of St. Non to her feet at the birth of David. Another well which had once a great celebrity is in the valley of the Alan, a little above the place where it opens to the sea. The spring, which burst from the ground to supply water for the baptism of St. David, changed once or twice according to the Lives, with due consideration for its nationality, into mead or metheglin.

The chief place in the district, however, was 'Yr Henllwyn' or 'Hên Mynyw,' the 'old bush.' There St. David 'was taught the psalms and the lessons and the public prayers;' and there his fellow disciples saw 'a pigeon with a golden beak instructing him and playing about him.' Afterwards he became a scholar in the so-called 'college' of Paulinus, at Whitland in Caermarthenshire. Paulinus or 'Paol hên' (the old) was, according to Welsh hagiology, one of the great teachers of his age; and Teilo, the saint of Llandaff, is mentioned as one of David's fellow-disciples. Such statements can only be received with hesitation; but the existence of Paulinus, at any rate, seems to be confirmed by the inscription on a stone found near Llandewi-Brefi in Cardiganshire, which commemorates a person of that name in two rough hexameters:

Servator fidaei, Patrieque semper amator  
Hic Paulinus iacit cultor pientissimus aequi.

Tradition (not the Lives) farther asserts that David became bishop or archbishop of Caerleon; and that, owing to the 'too great frequency of people' there, and to the neighbourhood of the Pagan English, he removed the see to Mynyw Latinised into Menevia, the site of the present Cathedral.

'Mynyw' signifies a 'bramble bush;' and the name is so far appropriate that the wild land round St. David's is still famous for its bramble berries. The present St. David's became afterwards known as Menevia, but the older settlement was at some little distance, although in the immediate

neighbourhood. Wherever it was, it has been regarded by Stukeley and many later antiquaries, as the site of the Roman Menapia, which Stukeley made the birthplace of the famous Carausius—thus ‘venturing,’ in his own words, ‘to restore to St. David’s one true Briton more.’ Unfortunately the existence of Menapia is only made known to us by an *Iter* in the *de Situ Britanniae* attributed to Richard of Cirencester, a work which the ablest modern investigators, including the editor of Richard’s *Speculum Historiale*, pronounce unhesitatingly to be a clumsy forgery. No Roman relics whatever have been discovered at or near St. David’s ; and although it has been suggested that the foundations of the Roman town may have been covered by the blown sand which extends for some distance inland on the south side of St. David’s Head, the fact that no mention of any ‘ancient’ building occurs in the *Lives*, or in any writing of Giraldus, who is eloquent on the Roman relics at Caerleon, renders it more than probable that the Roman Menapia is in all respects a city of cloudland—on unfit birthplace for the Carausius of Stukeley. But if Menapia thus disappears, ‘Hên Mynyw’ still remains. It seems most likely that this place really stood on the tract now covered with blown sand, and that the advance of the sand caused its final desertion. At any rate, when David determined on founding a church or monastery in his native district, he did not choose the ‘old bush,’ where he had been first taught—where, according to the legends, Gildas, the ‘wisest of Britons,’ recognised the future sanctity of David before his birth ; and from the shore near which St. Patrick, who had proposed settling in Wales, was shown in vision the whole of Ireland as the scene of his own labours, and was told that Wales was reserved for another teacher—but sought what was then perhaps the more complete seclusion of the valley of the Alan, the ‘Vallis Rosina,’ ‘Glyn Rosyn,’ as the *Lives* call it, no doubt from the Welsh ‘Rhôs,’ a moorland.

Of the condition of Wales at this time we know very little. Stories recorded in the Lives, and remains still existing in the country, may perhaps indicate that the district round Hên Mynyw was then wild and unsettled, a land of many small chieftains, constantly at feud with each other. David is said to have been greatly troubled by a certain Boia and his wife, the traces of whose fortress are pointed out on the summit of a rock named 'Clegyr Foia,' 'Boia's Rock,' between St. David's and the sea. Local tradition goes on to assert that a smaller 'strength,' overhanging the valley of the Alan, and much nearer St. David's, was constructed by the saint for the protection of his 'family,' as the inmates and dependents of a religious house were then called collectively. Love of his native district, and that desire for a secluded and ascetic life which was then common, and which may well have been fostered and encouraged by the horrors of the English conquest of Britain, were probably the chief causes which led to the foundation of the house in a place so remote and so little accessible. Except St. Asaph, which stands on high ground, the sites of the other Welsh cathedrals much resemble that of St. David's. They are placed in low and sheltered valleys, either close to a river or near some unfailing spring, one of the first necessities for those who established themselves on each site, and by whom the sees were founded. At St. David's, besides the river, there is a spring near the east end of the cathedral, which (probably after the building of the Lady Chapel) was called St. Mary's Well, but which David is said to have called forth by his prayers, for the service of his household.

The Monastery established in this place by St. David was, there can be no doubt, of the same character as the religious houses founded by St. Martin in Gaul in the fifth century (the first in Western Europe), and as those of the same type established in Ireland by St. Patrick (who was probably the

nephew and disciple of St. Martin) and his successors before the year 500. It was a 'familia' in which, while regular service was maintained in the church, learning was not neglected. There seems to have been a constant flow of scholars to the house of David, as, before his time, to those of Paulinus and Iltyd. Lands too were cultivated. The family had its flocks and herds, and laboured in the woods and on the moors to secure a due supply of winter fuel. With less of strict rule than is found among the first Benedictines, there was probably more attention to study, and the spread of religion was by no means unconsidered. By far the greater number of the mother churches in the wide diocese of St. David's were founded by David himself,\* and were named from him. The Triads class him with Padarn and Teilo as the 'three blessed visitors of the Isle of Britain.' 'They were so called because they went as guests to the houses of the noble, the poor, the native, and the stranger, without accepting fee or reward, victuals or drink ; but what they did was to teach the faith in Christ to every one without pay or thanks, besides which they gave to the poor and needy gifts of their gold and silver, their raiment and provisions.' It is probable that St. David's influence was felt throughout Wales during his lifetime ; and it is certain that the Irish Church was indebted to him, with his countrymen Gildas and Cadoc, for a great restoration of the faith and of order. A very curious document, first published by Ussher, and dating from the middle of the eighth century, divides the 'Saints of the Irish Church' into three classes or orders.† The first, 'Sanctissimus, burning like the sun,' comprises those who took St. Patrick for their model, and followed his institutions. The second order, *Sanctior*, shining like the

\* Rees, *Essay on the Welsh Saints*, p. 45. North Wales does not contain a single church or chapel dedicated to St. David.

† A translation of this document is inserted in Dr. Todd's *Life of St. Patrick*, p. 88. It is accepted by him as perfectly authentic.

moon, had no connection with Patrick, but had received an order of mass from David, Cadoc, and Gildas.\* The third order, Sanctus, whose light was that of the stars, were hermits and solitaries. Gildas is said to have gone himself to Ireland to restore the Catholic faith, which had been obscured in less than a century after the death of Patrick; and the legends of the later Irish saints bring nearly all the more distinguished of them to study in Wales, at 'Kilmuine,' the 'Church of the bramble'—the Irish equivalent for Mynyw. St. Finian of Clonard, 'oidhe' or 'foster father of the Saints of Ireland' as he is called, himself the master of a famous school which produced 3,000 disciples—

Trium virorum millium  
Sorte fit Doctor humilis—

had sat at the feet of St. David. St. Moedhog of Ferns was also in the monastery at Kilmuine, as was St. Bar of Cork; and according to Rhyddmarch's Life of St. David, a third or fourth part of Ireland was obedient to him. It is to St. David, moreover, if we are to believe Rhyddmarch, that Ireland is indebted for her bees. Modomnoc, a disciple of David in Glyn Rosyn, passed thence to Ireland, 'and a large swarm of bees followed him, and settled on the prow of the ship where he sat.' They accompanied him and supplied him with honey during his Irish mission; but 'not desiring to enjoy their company by fraud,' he brought them back to Wales, when 'they fled to their usual place, and David blessed Modomnoc for his humility.' Three times the bees went and returned with Modomnoc; 'and the third time holy David dismissed Modomnoc with the bees and blessed them'—saying that henceforth bees should prosper in Ireland, but that they should no longer increase in Glyn Rosyn. This, adds Rhyddmarch, is found to be the fact. Swarms decrease at St. David's, 'but Ireland,

\* For the independent evidence establishing the connection of St. David with Ireland, see Haddan & Stubbs, *Councils*, vol. i. p. 115..



in which until that time bees could never live, is enriched with plenty of honey. . . It is manifested that they could not live there before, for if you throw Irish earth or stone into the midst of the bees, dispersed and flying away they will shun it.\*

It is especially noticeable that this 'second order' of Irish saints seems to have no connection with Armagh, or with the institutions of St. Patrick. That saint is never mentioned in their Lives; and by their order of mass and their monastic rules they were immediately connected with Menevia and the Church of Wales. To this second order belong St. Columbkille and the numerous Irish missionaries who spread themselves throughout Europe from the end of the sixth to that of the eighth century. From Iona, as we know, came the teachers of the Scottish Gael and Picts, besides those first bishops of Northumbria who restored the faith in that English kingdom after the departure of Paulinus and the extinction of the Christianity introduced by him. We may well suppose that the see of these first Northumbrian bishops was fixed at Lindisfarne, the holy island,

Scourged by the winds' eternal sway,  
Open to rovers fierce as they—

with a distinct recollection of Iona. Many of the first teachers of Christianity in Scotland are said to have had their oratories in caverns on the coast. The cave of St. Columbkille is pointed out in Argyleshire. St. Serf has his on the coast of Fife; and we all remember the 'ocean cave' at St. Andrew's,

Where good St. Rule his holy lay  
From midnight to the dawn of day  
Sung to the billows' sound.

It would, perhaps, be too much to assert that the love of such

\* Rhyddmarch's Life of St. David, in *Lives of Cambro-British Saints*.

rock-walled and sea-girt solitudes descended through this 'second order' of saints from their early connexion with Menevia ; but it is at any rate sufficiently marked.\*

Besides numerous Irish, there is evidence that Constantine, Prince of Dyfnaint or Damnonia, left his kingdom about the year 589 to enter the Monastery of St. David. Constantine, or 'Cystennyn,' whose Roman name recalls the great Emperor whom Britain claimed as her own son, was the 'tyrannic whelp of the unclean Damnonian lioness' apostrophised, with other chieftains of Britain, by Gildas in his well-known epistle. He was afterwards revered as a saint in his former kingdom, and at least two churches in Cornwall are dedicated to him.

We may also accept as certain the presence of St. David at two, perhaps at three, synods, convened, apparently, for the construction and imposition of a penitential. The third synod was held at Caerleon in 601, the year in which the *Cambrian Annals* place the death of St. David. His presence is uncertain : but the synod itself was probably connected with the famous Conference of the British bishops with Augustine of Canterbury ; if, indeed, it was not the same. It would be a striking picture if we could believe that St. David, old and about to die, was present at this ominous interview.

At what time St. David received episcopal consecration is, as has been said, uncertain. There are some indistinct traces of the existence in Wales of 'monastic bishops' as they were called, that is, of bishops who performed episcopal functions within their own religious house, but who were without a regular diocese. Such bishops were numerous in Ireland ; but if they ever existed in Wales, it is tolerably certain that St. David did not belong to their class. A succession of bishops,

\* It is nowhere asserted that St. Columba, or Columbkille, was ever at St. David's. But he belongs distinctly to the 'second order' of saints, whose teaching and institutions were, as has been seen, under the immediate influence of the Welsh Church.

broken indeed, and not always consistent, has been traced with sufficient clearness as 'fairly to prove the continuous existence of the see from St. David's time.' He is therefore to be regarded as its founder. Legends embodied in the *Lives of St. Teilo and St. David* assert that in company with St. Padarn they went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where 'they were raised by the Patriarch to the episcopal dignity, Teilo in the room of Peter, David in that of James;' but this pilgrimage and consecration are common to the legends of many Welsh saints; and the peculiar dignity assigned to Teilo was no doubt invented during the dispute for precedence between the churches of Llandaff and St. David's.

Besides the shore chapels already mentioned, there were two on Ramsey Island, one at Porth Stinan, opposite the island, and one dedicated to St. Patrick, near the Whitesands, below Carn Llidi. St. Patrick's chapel, of which the foundations remain, no doubt marks the place anciently called 'Patrick's Seat,' whence, according to the legend, he was shown the whole of Ireland in vision. Capel Stinan, of which the walls are standing, is placed on the verge of the cliffs looking across the Sound of Ramsey. St. Justinian, to whom it is dedicated, was, says his legend, an Armorican who established himself on Ramsey and became St. David's confessor. His servants killed him, were struck with leprosy, and spent the rest of their days in penitence on a rock called 'the Lepers' rock,' in the sound. The body of Justinian walked across the sound, and landing at Porth Stinan was buried where the chapel now stands. All these chapels, according to a writer of the time of Elizabeth, were 'built for the devotion of seamen and passengers when they first came ashore. Other pilgrims also went to them. What was there offered was carried to the Cathedral, and divided every Saturday among the canons and priests. Some yet living that belong to the Church can remember since the offering money was brought on Saturdays to

the chapter-house, and there divided by dishfuls, the quantity not allowing them leisure to tell it.' Many pilgrims, as they approached St. David's from the north, made their first offerings at a chapel called the 'Chapel of the Fathom,' which stood at some distance from the sea. It contained a measure known as 'St. David's Fathom,' about three yards and a half, marked on one of the arches, and held to be the length of the saint's outstretched arms. St. David is traditionally said to have been of great stature. The paladins of Charlemagne and King Arthur's knights, especially Gawain, become giants in some forms of tradition; and St. David is not the only saint to whom a similar measure has been applied. It may be here remarked that the latest legends make David the uncle of King Arthur; and the arms assigned to Arthur, together with the shield given to Cadwallader, the last titular King of Britain, were formerly to be seen on the chancel roof of the Cathedral. As Welsh hagiology becomes more mediæval, it assumes more and more the character of the romantic *Mabinogion*, and Arthur and his knights are sometimes made to play actual parts in the story.

The monastery founded by St. David possibly changed its character long before the twelfth century, when Bishop Bernard established a body of canons here. Before that time, according to Giraldus, the clerks of St. David's had been known only as 'Glaswyr' [=Eglwyswyr] 'churchmen.' The gradual loss of early discipline is indicated by the story of Bishop Morgeneu, killed by the Northmen about the year 999, and who, says Giraldus, was the first of the bishops who ate flesh. Accordingly he appeared after his death, and declared that his death had been caused by this neglect of the ancient rule. 'Quia carnes comedi,' said the spectre, 'caro factus sum.' ('I ate meat, and therefore they made meat of me.') The Northmen, who hovered long about this coast, frequently plundered St. David's; and appearing for the last time

in 1088, are said to have destroyed the place utterly. But if the church and monastery were burnt at this time, they speedily arose from their ashes. From about 1071 to 1098, under the last Welsh bishops, the school of learning at St. David's was at least equal to what it had been in the days of its founder. Bishop Sulien, called the 'Wise,' 'the best of all the bishops in Wales for counsel, learning, religion,' died in 1088. He had received the Conqueror at St. David's in 1081, and was succeeded by his son Rhyddmarch, the biographer of St. David. Rhyddmarch died in 1098; and after his time, according to the Welsh Chronicle, 'instruction for scholars ceased in Mynyw.'

A great change was indeed impending. In 1115, Bernard, Chancellor to Matilda, queen of Henry I., became the first 'foreign' bishop of St. David's. It does not appear that he began to build; and he was perhaps contented with what must have been the very plain and simple church of his predecessors. But he established his canons here; and it was in his time, if we are to believe Godwin, that St. David was formally canonised by Pope Calixtus II. But with the instinct of a foreign churchman—the instinct which was displayed in Lanfranc's depreciation of the English saints—Bernard added a new dedication to his church, which henceforth became the Cathedral of St. David and St. Andrew. So St. Peter was joined with St. Teilo at Llandaff, and St. Mary with St. Daniel at Bangor.

The existing church was begun by Bishop Peter de Leia (1176—1198), who had been prior of Wenlock. Its architect, writes Sir Gilbert Scott, in his first report on the fabric (1862), 'seemed determined to plant, in the farthest extremity of our island, the standard of the utmost advancement of his art at the period of its most determined progression. The building is thus . . . a wonderfully interesting and valuable landmark in architectural history, taking, in the extreme west,

position parallel to that held by Canterbury in the extreme east of the island.' But on the architectural history and details of the church we must not dwell. To these the restoration in progress has already drawn attention. They are indeed full of interest ; and the extent and beauty of the later works, the vast episcopal palace, and the distinguished prelates by whom the see was frequently held during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, prove that St. David's, remote as it was, was then, from whatever causes (and probably the reputation of its great shrine was the principal), regarded as a position of no small dignity and importance. But at no period of its history was the place so remarkable, nor was its influence so great, as in that early time when St. David ruled over the rude huts and simple church of his 'scholars' in the solitude of Glyn Rosyn.

THE END.





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